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(Lewis)

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SING THE SOUTH

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SING THE SOUTH

BY

Judd Mortimer Lewis

HOUSTON, TEXAS
J. V. DEALY COMPANY
1905

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DEDICATION.

To the plain, every-day man, the man who believes that a tow-headed baby, a sweet, innocent girl, and a young mother are the most beautiful things in the whole world; the man to whom the child instinctively turns with arms outstretched for him to "take," from whom the stray dog does not shrink in expectation of a kick; the man, who when "the supper things" are put away, sits down with his wife at his elbow, his baby on his knee, and the fear of God in his heart; and to my dear wife and little girls, this book is affectionately dedicated.

The Author.

PREFACE.

During the past few years, Mr. J. M. Lewis has conducted a column of poetry, whims and fancies in the Houston Daily Post. Humor, wit, squibs and poems have flowed freely from his facile pen, and the product has been accepted with appreciation by his friends and the reading public.

Many of his friends whose fancies have been pleased and whose hearts have been moved by the delicate spirit of his poems, have thought that they should not be left to the precarious existence of memory and the scrap-book, and have accordingly prevailed upon Mr. Lewis to collect some of these wandering whims of fancy and to print them into a book.

Literature is the best and surest way in which to express and transmit the thoughts of the mind, the sympathies of the spirit, the philosophies of life, and the aspirations of the soul; and poetry is the most perfect flower in the gardens of literature. From the beginning men have sung of hope and despair, of love and hate, of peace and war, of faith and doubt, of good and evil, of life and death; and, so long as the human brain shall think, and the human heart shall feel, and the human fancy shall dream

and hope, so long will men sing the exultant notes of their gladness or the despairing wail of their sorrow.

From a multitude of themes about which he has written, Mr. Lewis seems most to love those that relate to childhood and to nature, and the poems in this little volume relate to those themes. Indeed, his kinship to the sights and scenes and sounds of nature, and his responsive sympathies with the sentiments clustering around childhood, are the predominant characteristics of his verse.

The poems gathered into this book reveal a spirit in unison with the laws of life, at peace with all mankind, in touch with the ennobling forces of nature, and attuned to the sweetest harmonies that pervade the human heart. They are not marred by the minor notes of despondency or pessimism. They are keenly alive with the spirit of hope and of love—the flower and fragrance of life. They are ennobling by their appeal to the affections, their touch with the spiritual, their kinship with the purity and sweetness of childhood, and their aspiration for the better things in life.

I am sure their author sends them forth on a mission of symapthy, and hope, and love.

Joe Henry Eagle

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CREEPY.

Laugh, dear, and gurgle,
  Tumble and play;
Kick your pink heels, dear,
  Get in the way,
The world's not for grown-ups,
  No, not at all!
It's just for wee babies
  Just learning to crawl.

It's just for wee babies,
  Just all of the time!
Glories and roses
  And moonflowers climb
Up high on the trellis,
  A-sparkle with dew,
To just please the babies
  And make them say, "Goo!"

I'm thinking that heaven
  Is just for wee girls,
And just for boy-babies
  With tousled gold curls;
Grown-ups will just be there
  To help them to play;
So laugh, dear, and tumble,
  And get in the way.

FOUR YEARS OLD.

My little, laughing
    Four-year-old,
My dancing, little
    Beam of gold,
You make this old, old heart of me
And all the world, brim full of glee;
    As full as it can hold!

Your little, dancing,
    Slippered feet,
Your lilting, singing
    Voice and sweet,
Make life and work seem simply play,
From morning when I go away
    Till night-time when we meet.

Your flying, wind-kissed,
    Golden curls,
Your laughing lips,
    The rows of pearls
You show in smiling, are to me
The rarest, fairest gems that be;
    O, best of little girls.

O, best of loving,
    Laughing girls,
When evening's crimson
    Flag unfurls
I come expectant up the street,
A-listening for your flying feet
    And tossing yellow curls.

O, little baby
    Girl, my own,
When trying, carking
    Years have flown,
Then may your laugh ring glad and clear,
Be just as full of joy and cheer,
    Dear heart, when you are grown.

WOMAN.

Oh, lovely woman! man's great bane
  And joy! You ne'er can pall!
Source of all pleasure and all pain
  And—bless you!—worth it all!

HIS TOAST.

Fill, fill your slender goblets
  A-brim with blood-red wine,
And drink a toast with laughter
  To maids with eyes a-shine;
Aye, toast your absent sweethearts
  With laugh and lilt and swing;
Fill high the brimming goblets
  And let your accents ring.

Aye, fill the brimming beakers,
  And think of gold-crowned head;
And think of blue eyes shining,
  And curving lips and red;
And toast, each one, his sweetheart,
  And drink the bumper down,
To maids with blue or gray eyes,
  Or maids with eyes of brown.

But fill for me no bumper
  Of ruby-colored wine;
My thoughts are far a-faring
  In paths that once were mine,
Back of the years of trying,
  Back of the sweetest smile
A sweetheart ever gave me,
  To years of otherwhile.

Back of the clink of glasses
  And friendships that are mine,
Back of lips curved in laughter
  And youthful eyes a-shine,
Where a fern-bordered hollow
  Gives up a bubbling spring,
And where, in beechen shadows,
  The robin redbreasts sing.

My soul, by some enchantment,
  Harks back to other days,
To one who led me upward
  Through wondrous, untried ways;
To one of rough endearments,
  In homely garments clad;
Drink, you, each to his sweetheart,
  I drink to dear old Dad.

TO A BRIDE.

Happy is the bride whom the sun shines on,
  And happy today are you;
May all of the glad dreams you have dreamed
  In all of your life come true;
May every good there is in life
  Step down from the years to you.

There's nothing so sweet as a maid is sweet,
  On the day she becomes a bride;
Oh, the paths that ope to the dancing feet!
  Oh, the true love by her side!
Oh, the gray old world looks a glad old world,
  And its fields of pleasure wide.

Because you are good and are sweet and fair,
  And because you are young and true,
May every day of your life be glad,
  As glad as today for you;
May all of the glad dreams you have dreamed
  In all of your life come true.

HOPE'S FRUITION.

In the muck and slime of that ancient time,
  When earth from chaos hurled
Took shape and form and rode the storm
  Through countless eons whirled,
On its crumbling crust of cosmic dust
  I crawled a created thing;
A creature vast from the black ooze cast,
  Beyond all imagining.

And my eyeless face searched the moonless space,
  Though the voice of my woe was dumb,
And I loathsome sprawled, or all lonesome crawled,
  And waited for you to come;
But you came not near, and for very fear
  Of the lonesome vast profound,
I died, and sank in the noisome dank,
  While Time resumed her round.

Till the ages vast from their dark womb cast
  Me again upon the earth;
From my hooded eyes I beheld arise
  The sun, and the season's birth;
And I viewed my length and essayed my strength
  In the garish light of day,
With the shadow vast my huge bulk cast
  I gamboled about in play.

When the day was fled, and my shadow dead,
  I whimpered for what I knew
Was still due to me from my destiny,
  But the ages brought not you;
And for you I wept till my great life crept
  From very longing away,
And my bones were lost where the ages tossed
  Them in mesozoic clay.

Through creations strange down the grooves of change
  I have searched for you afar,
In the deep green sea I have sought for thee,
  Have ranged through the ambient air;
In reincarnations and transformations
  By the sacred river's brink,
'Neath the Sphinx's smile by the winding Nile
  Where ships of the desert drink.

From the primal slime of the birth of Time,
  When my sobbing, pulsing breath
Moaned to my heart for my other part
  Till the longing brought me death;
Now my earth-chained soul draws near the goal
  Whose winning shall give me thee,
And the light divine of your eyes shall shine
  Reward to my constancy.

Where the lilac's bloom wafts its sweet perfume
  Through the twilight's purple shine,
At your timid feet I shall kneel, my sweet,
  Shall clasp you and call you mine;
In the joyous bliss of a clinging kiss
  Our souls in a swift transition
Shall become as one, and, their questing done,
  Shall attain Hope's sweet fruition.

FATHER'S VOICE.

Sometimes I wake from dreams and wonder where
  I am for just a moment; then a lisp
Comes trembling to me: "Papa, are you there?"
  Just those four words in just the faintest wisp
Of a wee voice, a wee and frightened tone;
  And I make haste to answer: "Yes, dear, why?"
And then she says: "Me finked me was alone——"
  Her voice trails off into a drowsy sigh.

Poor little girl! she sees no light or spark,
  And feels strange, shapeless forms around her
    creep;
But when her father's voice comes through the dark
  She knows that she is safe, and sinks to sleep;
And though the dark-time dangers are as real
  And dreadful, too, as aught on earth could be,
She hears her father's voice and seems to feel
  That all that threatened now is bound to flee.

Our Father! who art with us in the dark
  And in the light, whose presence wraps us round;
Though darkness shuts us in and no faint spark
  Doth guide our feet; and whither we are bound,
Or whence we come, is hidden from our sight
  So that we merely grope our way along,
We feel Thy presence guiding us aright,
  And paths, erstwhile all dark, break into song.

And when life's bedtime becks us to our rest
  We falter at the dark that threats us then;
Like frightened children we do do our best
  To stay awake and ope our eyes again;
And in fear's perfect ecstasy we shriek:
  "Our Father! Oh, our Father! Are You there?"
And calmly through the dark Your accents speak,
  And so we bid farewell to every care.

So, oh, my little girl, on your old dad
  You lean, and go to sleep in sweet content;
And dad knows how you feel for he has had
  The self-same feeling; his own strength all spent,
He oft has bowed him down in bitter woe,
  When all seemed dark and life was just a spell
Of bitterness—and then—God's voice! and, lo!
  Life's darkness turned to light! and all was well.

OUR MARJORIE.

When your wee head lies heavy on dad's arm,
  And eyes with all the mischief gone away
Look listless up, dad feels a wild alarm,
  And all the prayers his lips can frame and say,
All torrent like, speed upward to the throne;
  Prayers for your speedy weal, the old sweet smile!
Oh, you have filled my heart so full, my own!
  And you have been here such a little while!

I sit and hold your playthings, yes I do,
  And sadly think of games we used to play;
Of how you laughed when we played peek-a-boo—
  And just to think, all this was yesterday!
And now we walk on tiptoe to and fro,
  And on our knees drop down beside your cot;
And you—you look with eyes that do not know,
  And your pale brow does fright us 'tis so hot.

Last night I walked with you, my Marjorie,
  Clasped in my arms, your cheek against my own,
And, oh, my baby girl! sweet soul of me!
  My heartstrings writhed beneath your plaintive moan!
I know, my little girl, you wondered why
  That dad, who held you close, who loves you so,
Could bear to hear your plaintive little cry
  And would not ease your pain! You cannot know!

You cannot know, nor guess, what dad would do—
  Two hearts, two souls, are wrapped up in your weal!
Oh, give us yesterday and peek-a-boo!—
  If tears could ease the pain your wee limbs feel
Then had your first wee cry brought quick relief;
  Our ready-gushing tears brought back again
The smiles of erst! our love engendered grief
  Had soothed your fevered brow and eased your pain.

And now I hold your playthings in my hands—
  Your rubber doll and cat, your bouncing ball—
And something grips my heart with crushing bands
  Until my eyes are blurred and teardrops fall.

That dad is so impotent, Marjorie,
  Does give him greater grief than he has known!
Ah, life and all, dear child, he'd give for thee!
  Would God that dad could make your pains his
    own.

A REVERIE.

Just a dainty silver clasp,
Wrought in Spanish filigree,
Lying shyly in my grasp,
Thrills my blood with ecstasy;
Just a circlet, perfume laden,
Made of softest silken woof,
And my mind's eye sees a maiden
'Mid the smoke wreaths stand aloof.
As my eyes grow dim with dreaming,
And I yield me to her spell;
O'er my mind with fancies teeming
Rules this maid intangible.
Hand in hand o'er golden meadows,
Through wide groves of whispering trees,
Where sweet songsters wake the echoes
And soft fountains cool the breeze,
So we wander nothing heeding
In that mild enchanted clime,
Where the cares of life, receding,
Leave no thought of earthly time.

Pity life is not all dreaming,
Fancy's songs e'er being sung,
In the enchanted land of seeming
We remain forever young.
But old age's ruthless finger
Draws time's scars across our face;
Youthful gleams no longer linger
As the years come on apace.

* * *

With such trifles for a starter,
Strange what fancies we beget;
Just a maiden's dainty garter
And a Turkish cigarette.

OUR WORKS.

If men are known by their works,
  The thought through our consciousness steals,
That in the fullness of time
  We shall all be judged by our wheels.

REMEMBERING.

And ever in the moonlight,
  As the trumpet-blossom swings,
Comes a time of sweet rememb'ring
  Of old, unforgotten things;
Of old, name-carved, spreading beeches,
Of old, moonlit, sandy reaches,
Of half whispered, half thought speeches,
  Like a rustle of white wings.

Comes the moonpath on the water,
  Gilding the sea's dread abyss;
Comes the lapping of the ripples,
  Comes the memory of this;
That, through all the years may measure,
Yet my lips have drained the pleasure
Of life's greatest, grandest treasure,
  Of first love and love's first kiss.

When the moon lights up the prairie
  Come life's memories to me;
When the rolling, the far-reaching
  Stirs and ripples like a sea,
You may think life's cark and fretting,
As life's orb grows near its setting,
Crowds my soul to your forgetting,
  But forgetting may not be.

PEEK-A-BOO.

Now don't you know it, Eyes-o-blue,
That dad can't play at peek-a-boo,
And sit up here all night with you?
    He can't indeed.
Now look here, Miss Stay-up-all-night—
Oh, peek-a-boo! now, that's all right—
You're—there! now duck down out of sight!
    What you do need

Is something—peek! oh, peek-a-boo!
Now duck again!—tucked onto you
Right where you sit! oh, yes you do!
    That's right, now grin!
You star-eyed, laughter-loving mite!
You haven't things adjusted right;
Folks are supposed to sleep at night!
    And it's a sin

To keep dad dodging back and forth,
Now jumping up for all he's worth,
And losing sleep to give you mirth—
    Oh, peek-a-boo!
Peek! ah, there, Eyes! I see you now!
Why—where—is—Margie, anyhow?
Peek! there you are! I thought, I vow,
    I'd lostd you!

What I had started out to say
Was, that the proper time to play
Was day, Miss Blue Eyes, just plain day;
    And night time deep
Was made for folks like you and me
To cuddle down snug as can be,
And go to sleep. Oh, Marjorie!
    Please go to sleep!

WE WALKED AFAR.

We walked afar along a winding lane
  That led us through idyllic country ways;
A youth that we thought ne'er would come again
  Was ours again. As in those far-off days
We marveled at the blueness of the skies;
  We sought forget-me-nots and laughed with glee;
And I, I looked down deep into her eyes,
  And she, as in those old days, looked at me.

Within her bonnet hanging from my arm,
  Forget-me-nots and buttercups were piled;
The rustling grasses caused her mild alarm,
  As of a snake, then she looked up and smiled—
Smiled lifelong trust into my eyes again—
  And so we walked, our fingers interlaced,
Herself, and youth, and me, adown the lane;
  And gladness walked beside us where we paced.

Now some strange cloud effect did catch her eye;
  Now did she stoop to find a hidden bloom;
We saw the lazy hawk hang in the sky;
  We smelled the woodland jasmine's sweet perfume;
All was as it had been; by some strange spell
  Our years were fallen from us, and we stood
In paths we both had known, remembered well.
  Ah, youth returned seemed sweet, and life was
    good!

We heard the peacock's cry sound loud and shrill,
  And soft a breeze did rustle through the trees;
And in the path that curved around the hill
  The golden-rod climbed upward to our knees;
And from above the yellow jasmine hung,
  And from some hidden nook a mockbird sang,
And o'er our heads red trumpet-flowers swung,
  And 'neath our feet the fresh green grasses sprang.

And then we turned us back; the evening's gloam
  Hung halo-like about us as we walked;
Afar we saw the shining lights of home,
  And with the sight age did come back, and stalked
Beside us two, and yet we twain were glad;
  Glad to leave youth, the woodland's solitude;
Glad to fly back to joys youth had not had,
  As homing pigeons wing back to their brood.

THE BIRTH OF ROMANCE.

Oh, Edwin, you ought to just hear the things,
  The things that my nurse tells me!
Of dreadful old bogies with horns and things,
Of big green dragons with horns and wings,
  "They eat little girls," says she!

"They eat little girls if they don't be good;
  Just eat 'em right up," says she!
She says in the daytime they live in the wood,
Just a-grindin' their teeth and a-dreamin' of blood,
  A-dreamin' of blood and me!

And when I am good—though I'm always good—
  She tells me of warriors bold;
Of knights who go dashing through field and flood
Just a-lookin' for dragons that's a-pinin' for blood;
  Brave warriors with spurs of gold.

So, Edwin, just think! if your Katherine—
  Your Kathie, who loves you so—
Should be gobbled right up by the dragon green,
Or the worst old bogie that ever you seen,
  Then, Edwin, what would you do?

Would you mount your beautiful Morgan brown,
  And ride with lance in rest,
With a whoop and halloo, through street and town
Till you found out the bogies and rode them down
  For the maiden that you love best?

If I thought that you would, oh, then you'd see—
  I want you to come so bad—
I would be just as naughty as I could be
Till the big green dragon would come for me,
  Or nursie would wish that he had!

BOO!

When you pick up the tidy and say: "Peek!"
  Then I lay down my paper, for I know
Those mischief-brimming eyes will spring a-leak,
  And tears of grief will well and overflow
If I refuse to play; so I unbend
  And look, and look, and look, and look for you,
And you don't know that it is all pretend,
  And, my! but I get scared when you say: "Boo!"

My! but I do get scared, and I say: "Oh!"
  And in my fright sometimes fall on the floor;
And now you gurgle, yes, and now you crow!
  Until your eyes are fairly brimming o'er;
Then, shaking your wee sides, you hide again,
  While I seek high and low and call to you;
And I can't find you anywhere, and then
  You jump right out before me and say: "Boo!"

When lamps are lighted, and when night has come,
  And I pick up my paper for a while,
You pluck my sleeve, and I pretend I'm dumb,
  Until your searching eyes detect a smile;
And then it's off! the paper falls aside,
  And every place that I can look I do;
But, somehow, I can't find just where you hide,
  Until I'm scared to pieces by your "Boo!"

And, my! but I get scared! I tremble so
  That I fall down and flop like one possessed!
And how you do just shake your sides and crow,
  And stir me up, until, at your behest,
I put my fright behind me and come out
  Prepared to do as you would have me do;
Play hide-and-seek and join you in the rout,
  And be half scared to death when you say: "Boo!"

And, oh, my winsome one! when old and gray,
  I lay aside life's games and you are grown;
If when I'm old I'm sometimes in the way—
  You know you may have wee ones of your own—
I'd have you not see me as I am then,
  But as I am while now I romp with you!
Look sometimes back to these dear days again,
  And think how scared I was when you said: "Boo!"

A SKIPPER OUT OF GLOUCESTER.

There's a music in the singin' of the cordage in the wind;
There's a rhythm in the growlin' of the seas that break behind;
There's a salt tang in the spindrift when the billows break and comb,
And a fisher out of Gloucester uppin' anchor heads for home.

The fish had led us north'ard, east-by-north'ard, and we lay
In a snug Norwegian harbor, some old 'sund-or-other bay,
With some forty thousand halibut an' cod down in our hold,
An' the seas outside a-frothin' an' the wind a-cuttin' cold.

We were nor'-nor'east from Gloucester some four
thousand miles an' more;
Nor'-by-east of the Loffodens on a bleak Norwegian shore,
Ridin' gently at our anchor to each smooth and rolly swell,
Waitin' till the tempest slackened, for the wind was playin' hell.

Then the cook brought off provisions an' a letter; how it read
Just the skipper knew, who got it, an' somehow he never said;
But I know we upped the anchor an' we broke for open sea
In a gale from out the Arctics, an' Loffoden on our lee.

So we banged her out and south'ard—banged her down sou'west-by-west;
Every man slept in his oilskins, little handfuls just of rest,
An' by day the gale shrieked by us, an' by night it screamed an' moaned,
An' our sticks were bent like willows an' our timbers creaked an' groaned!

An' we had her dressed for flyin'! jumbo, jib, fore, main an' all!
An' both tops'ls! with the halliards fairly snarlin' at the squall!
An' the water smashin' past us—we could touch it on our lee—
An' our cat-heads barely showin' now an' then above the sea!

An' we trimmed her! an' we drove her! she was sailin' on her side!
Two of us lashed to her tiller, an' her canvas spreadin' wide!
An' we crossed an English liner, 'neath her bows, an', 'fore she spoke,
She was in our wake an' faded like a ragged wisp o' smoke!

An' we picked up Sable Island, an' above the singin' spar
We could hear the breakers boomin' as we crossed the no'theast bar,
An' we swung her for Cape Sable, an' we drove her down the coast
Like a ghost born out of darkness an' again in darkness lost!

Then, great glory! how we drove her! till we heard her timbers beg!
West, half-west-by-no'th we drove her! we was on our homeward leg!
An' we never eased up on her when we rounded Eastern Point!
An' we banged her into Gloucester like we'd open every joint!

Some four thousand miles of ocean an' a short sixteen-day run!
In a gale that snapped the reef-ties like the crackin' of a gun!
Then the skipper got a message, an' his eyes lit up with joy:
"Your old woman's round the house ag'in, an', Cap, this one's a boy!"

There's a music in the singin' of the cordage in the wind;
There's a rhythm in the growlin' of the seas that break behind!
There's a salt tang in the spindrift when the billows break and comb,
And a skipper out of Gloucester weighin' anchor heads for home.

WHICH?

Are dreams or memories best?
    I do not know.
In dreams I have caressed
    Your lips, and lo!
You walked beside me there
With your tumbled, sun-kissed hair,
And you were more than fair—
    I do not know.

If memories or dreams
    Are sweetest, dear,
I do not know. It seems
    Both bring you near.
In memory we tread
Through the paths our love once led,
With love's blue skies o'erhead—
    Your tones I hear.

Are dreams or memories
    The best to you?
Or do the bitter lees
    Of cups we knew
Embitter every draught
Of each cup your lips have quaffed
Since the days we loved and laughed
    And lived, we two?

Dreams are far more real
    It seems to me;
Wiping out the griefs I feel
    And bringing thee—
Still they're fantasies you know;
Dreamland's breezes never blow,
Never whisper soft and low,
    And cannot be.

While memory brings you back,
    It brings back thee
Down life's perfumed sunset track,
    It does, to me;
Real days of love and you;
Real blossoms decked with dew;
Real skies of turquoise blue
    That used to be.

MAY MEMORY.

Oh, wine in cut-glass goblets tall,
Your thrall is loosed of me;
No more do thoughts of wassail call
With strength that used to be;
I hear a tinkling waterfall
Beneath a greenwood tree,
And once again the old-time spring
Doth lift its voice and lilt and sing,
And send its call to me.

Doth lift its voice, and lilt and sing,
Its old-time melody;
No more amid the clink and ring
Of glass and revelry
Do I take part. Gone arms that cling,
And eyes, and devilry!
And once again I hear the call
Of a remembered waterfall
A-lilting come to me.

Oh, old remembered wayside spring,
Beneath the spreading tree
Within whose boughs brown thrushes sing,

Beside whose roots the knee
Doth press lush grass, soft as a thing
From loom of Araby;
The joy that comes of your far call,
Oh, lilting, wimpling waterfall,
No wine may bring to me.

Oh, days when, just a little boy,
I paused beside the pool,
And bent my supple knee with joy
To drink its waters cool,
And with a glee no years may cloy
Went riotous to school!
Now, with a glee no years may cloy,
I drink to you and that glad boy,
In water clear and cool.

In water clear and cool I drink
To memory of you;
No wine in carven cups that clink
Holds half so sweet a brew!
Oh, tinkling spring of grassy brink
A-brim with sparkling dew!
Whenever comes the month of May
My mem'ry takes the well-trod way
To childhood and to you!

A TOUCH OF NATURE.

(News Special.)

FORT WORTH, Texas, May 14.—One touch of sorrow makes the whole world akin, one touch of human nature makes mankind glorious, one touch of charity softens the hardest heart. That's why East Fifth street, between Rusk and Calhoun, is closed to travel. The little four-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Dickinson is lying dangerously ill. Intense quiet is essential for her recovery. The jolting noises of travel on the street in front of the house hindered her progress to health. The situation was laid before the city authorities. As Alexander cut the Gordian knot, so did the city authorities comply with the request to have the street closed to travel.

Heretofore streets have been closed on account of improvements being made, presidential parades, street fairs and carnivals, for the laying of pave-

THE MORNING-GLORIES ARE DIPPED IN DEW.

ments and a hundred and one other things. But reasons that worm their way into the hearts of mankind, that are not marred by the jingle of dollars, prompted this last order of the city authorities. And not a single complaint has been nor will a single complaint be registered with the city on account of this section of the street being closed.

Oh, baby, that tosses in illness there,
  With the fever flush on your tender cheek,
With fretful toss of the tousled hair,
  With hands grown listless and accents weak,
A city turns from its way for you;
  And traffic's insistent, resistless tide
Turns wide from the way that it erst surged through,
  And murmurs a wish as it turns aside.

And back from the barrier it would not pass,
  With noises hushed, goes the ebb and flow
Of the city's tide, goes the lad and lass,
  Goes the older one whose it is to know
The charm of the wee, glad clasping hands,
  Of a little bit of a baby girl;
The hurt and woe and love's tightened bands
  At the fevered cheek and the tousled curl.

For a baby's life has a city's block
  Been made as still as a country lane,
For a baby's life has the jar and shock,
  And rattle of hoof, and the clank of chain
Been banished far; and the barrier brings
  The stranger tear to life-hardened eyes,
And many a wish and a prayer upwings
  For sleep to come where the baby lies.

For healing sleep where the baby lies
  To come and press the wee eyelids down,
For cooling rest for the fevered eyes,
  For the kiss of health on the tousled crown;
And then the barriers shall swing aside
  And the rattle and jostle and whizz and whirr
Shall resume its way with resistless tide,
  And the heart of a city be glad for her.

Oh, little bit of a baby girl,
  The morning-glories are dipped in dew,
And every morning their blooms unfurl
  And seem to nod and to wait for you,
And city-wide are the prayers they say,
  The city's people, and all the whirl
Of traffic stops or is turned away
  For your sake, oh, little bit of a girl.

GET OUT.

Get out where the bayous are shaded and brown,
Get out where rose petals are eddying down,
Get out where the world wears a dew-spangled crown,
Get out, oh, get out, oh, get out of the town—
  Get out of the town in the morning!

Get out where the ripples run glad in the sun,
Get out to the fields where the green billows run,
Get out where the forces of nature have fun,
Get out, oh, get out to where day is begun,
  Get out of the town in the morning!

Get out of the town in the morning and hear
The birds in the thickets all caroling clear,
Where the mocking-bird hollers: "Good morning!
      Good cheer!"
Where the sky arches clear and where heaven seems
      near,
  Get out of the town in the morning!

Get out in the country and be just a boy,
Get out and drink deep of the old-fashioned joy,
Get out where no trials shall bring you annoy,
Where God walks in splendor, and days never cloy,
  Get out of the town in the morning!

MABEL.

Even as we know it is, dear heart, with thee,
So shall it be with us; unleashed and free
Our souls shall seek their own, and we shall be
  Free of the world, and happy, dear, with thee.

We watch the jasmine buds of thy delight
Where they flare white against the purple night,
And the moon-flowers open round and white,
  And the old mockbird lilts a sweet "Goodnight."

And four-o'clocks and morning-glories bloom,
And Marechal Niels send far their sweet perfume,
And roses, flame-like, rest against the gloom
  Of the dark night that they cannot illume.

These blooms we tend are such, dear, as you knew;
Glories and jasmine, sparkling wet with dew;
But now, with them, there grows a spray of rue;
  A blossom, dear, praise God, you never knew.

And when we weep 'tis for ourselves we weep;
For thou art glad the other side of sleep,
Where fields of asphodel illimitable sweep;
  We know you are while our lone watch we keep.

But we shall come, freed from earth's husk, and then
We shall be glad, as you are glad, again;
Shall mount to thee where, now beyond our ken,
  You smiling wait till Fate shall whisper when.

We'll fold thee closer longer we're apart!
Glad—gladder, dear! for all the woe and smart!
Laughing!—aye, laughing! with lips curved and apart!
  Our little girl! dear heart! dear heart! dear heart!

THE LITTLE ORPHANT.

Seen a little orphant boy,
Never had no top ner toy;
Sorter looked at me askance,
(He had patches on his pants
An' his shirt was big fer him,
Hangin' f'm each puny limb
Like he was a scarecrow.) Say:
He looked at me thissaway,
An' he said—an' gin a pause—
"Reckon that ol' Sandy Claws
Kin find me out where I am
Since 'at both my pap an' mam
Have gone dead; like oncet he did
'Fore I was a norphant kid?"

Derned ol' little shirt-tail tad!
Swear he had me feelin' bad!
Him 'ithout no paw er maw—
Tell ye what—I stopped ter chaw
My terbaccer, an', I vum!
Reckon thet I gulluped some
'Fore I answered—bet I did!

Derned ol' little shirt-tail kid!
'N I said: "Bud"—'n'en give a pause
Whilst I worked my derned ol' jaws,
Thinkin' how I'd like ter git
Him some boy's duds that 'ud fit;
Sorter Buster Brown style suit;
Now ain't I th' ol' galoot!

Swear I hadn't no idee
That I'd take him home o' me
Till the thought jest struck me: "Souse!"
'N I sez: "Sandy's at my house;
You jest come along o' me
An' you'll git a Chrismuss tree,
An' some oranges an' things."
Swear ye'd think we both had wings
Hikin' homeward like we did,
Me an' that there orphant kid!
An' he didn't do a thing
But jest dance around an' sing
Chrismuss morning! but, by gee!
He wa'n't half as glad as me!

OF YOU.

Last night I dreamed of hollyhocks and you,
Of Easter lilies wet with sparkling dew,
Of whispering trees whose every tone we knew,
And every sylvan path we've wandered through;
    But most, oh, most of you!

I dreamed of the old bridge o'er the lagoon,
Of lapping ripples silvered by the moon,
And read with my soul's eyes life's mystic rune,
Till all the chords of being swept in tune,
    And, singing, sang of you!

Of you the sighing branches swaying low,
Of you the hidden streamlet's tinkling flow,
Of you and all of love one life may know;
Soft beat my heart with rhythmic tone and slow,
    Of you; all, all of you!

Light fell the years as crinkled rose leaves fall,
Sweetly the birds trilled forth their matin call,
Bright gilt the dawn each swaying poplar tall,
Sleep fled with night, and dreams and darkness; all
    But sweet memories of you!

A CASTLE IN SPAIN.

I have builded you, sweetheart, a castle in Spain,
  And robbed life of its sorrow; you're mine once again;
And we walk down the corridors fancy hath made,
  Midst columns of jasper and onyx and jade.

White—white as your soul—are the garments you wear,
  White gems nestle close in the coils of your hair,
And your voice whispers soft through the corridor's gloom,
  Where censers, slow swinging, waft sweetest perfume.

And cupids, and psyches, and satyrs and gnomes
  Disport through the courts amid tropical blooms;
And nymphs and mermaidens and tritons are there
  From porphyry founts tossing gleams in the air.

Till musical murmurs in cadences soft
  Sweep round us, and borne by enchantment aloft,
Weave spells 'midst a fretwork of amber and gold,
  Where the dark, fringed and purple, hangs fold
    upon fold.

Dim vistas where lamps alabaster are swung,
  Where love's gonfalons gay to soft breezes are flung,
Stretch away to a chamber enchanted and dim,
  Whose portals are guarded by bright seraphim.

And your couch, lighted up by the twilight's soft
    gleams,
  Is woven for you from the fabric of dreams;
While sleep, like a mantle, comes borne on the breeze
  Sweeping cool from the heights of the blue
    Pyrenees.

WHEN I LAY ME DOWN TO SLEEP.

Dear old dad, I'm, oh, so homesick, and I'd give the world to be
Back beneath the dear old roof-tree kneeling down beside your knee,
Like I used to in my nightie when the day-end shadows fell,
And the night came softly creeping o'er the scenes I loved so well.
Now I fear I'm almost crying; tears bedim my tired eyes,
Oh, for just one hour of childhood and the dear old lullabies!
Just to feel your arms and mother's round my childish shoulders creep,
As when I in drowsy accents lisped: "I lay me down to sleep."

Let the day be e'er so toilsome, when the shades of
night have come,
Then your face, your face and mother's, smile on
me from out the gloom;
And the city's dreary clamor and the choking dust
and grime,
Fading, weave themselves in visions of the home
that once was mine.
Loud and shrill my boyish whistle echoes from the
pine-clad hill
As I lure the wary grayling from the pool below
the rill,
And we battle through the shallows where the eddies
curve and sweep,
Till, oh, dad! I get so homesick when I lay me
down to sleep!

Don't you think the old hills miss me, miss me just a
little, dad?
I have lost my old ambitions, all the hopes I ever
had!
Would you think me weak and wanton if I came back
home to you?
Came back home without the glory of the deeds I
hoped to do?

For my heart is scarred and weary and I've faltered
on the way,
And my mind keeps harking backward, back to
where I used to play;
And the eyes that shone so brightly through the years
have learned to weep;
And—I long to be at home, dad, when I lay me
down to sleep!

PROBABLY HAD.

"He says"—and here the maiden paused
And conned the missive o'er—
"He says he'd like to 'meet' me,
That he's seen my face before."
And then her giggling laughter
Wiped out all of anger's trace,
And she said: "Possibly he's right,
That's where I wear my face."

MUSIC.

It's the "oompah, oompah, oompah," of the music
That a band's a-playin' somewhere down the street,
That's a-doin' rag-time stunts along my heartstrings,
That's a-pullin' and a-haulin' at my feet;
I'd like ter just head up an' foller after,
A-takin' of their dust an' steppin' high,
An' never look to this way nor to that way
At all the folks a-watchin' us go by.

It's the "oompah, oompah, oompah," of the music,
The flyin' flags an' blarin' of the band,
That makes my mind go "oompah, oompah, oompah!"
That keeps my feet a-jiggin' where I stand;
That makes my mind go swiftly harkin' backward
To grind-organs and to bands I used to know;
Back to a village street they used to play in;
Back to the daisied fields of long ago.

It's the "oompah, oompah, oompah," of the music
That makes me prick my ears and lift my feet;
It's the liftin', liltin' rapture of the music
That takes me back to other times as sweet;
I hope that when I'm called to go up yonder,
And the garment of my soul, this worthless clay,
Is bound for its last restin' place, the music
Will go blarin': "Oompah, oompah!" all the way.

WOMAN'S VIRTUE.

You know I would obey your beck and come
  If you but looked my way again and smiled!
With conscience, all but love itself, grown dumb
  Would loose the clinging fingers of my child!
Leave it and all this better life behind—
  My happy home! all I have tried to be!
Ah, love is deaf and dumb, not only blind!
  A suppliant today I kneel to thee!

I am a woman—weak as women are;
  You are a man; your heritage is strength;
Go, search ye all the world, or near or far—
  Ah, where is one would go to such a length
As I had gone for thee? Not one! not one!
  Give me your strength—aye, I am weak indeed!
But let your love be as a tale that's done!
  If you have strength give it for this my need!

You claim you loved me, yet you did not say—
  You told it not to me—in days agone!
You held my hand a moment—went your way—
  You in the world and of it; me alone!
You thought I would await your coming home?
  You thought to see the love-light in my eyes?
You thought we'd walk afar and in the gloam
  Stand hand in hand and watch the white moon rise?

Nay! and you had such love why hide it me?
  My very soul hung palpitant—apoise—
My love from my two eyes looked out to thee—
  Ah, women's hearts are fragile, brittle toys!
You went your way, no word, nor yet a sign;
  You broke my heart and knew it not, nor cared!
And I—this home, this baby boy, is mine;
  Mine the full faith of him whose work I've shared.

And now you tell your love! recall a waltz!
  Words that meant naught to you nor yet to me;
Yet you recall them now and call me false!
  I—I am false to self, but not to thee!
Yea—help me, God!—if you say, "Come," I come—
  Why tear afresh this ever bleeding wound?
Go, go your way and let love's voice be dumb!
  My virtue at your feet is lying bound!

And virtue, to man's honor shall it plead?
  She gives her all for love! What giveth he?
Pray go your way; give not my ravings heed!
  Have pity—all I ask—pray pity me!
Beck not to me! nor call! nor even smile!
  Go, you, your way! pursue life's destined plan!
Let me but keep my vows—devoid of guile!
  Yet proud that he I loved has proved a man!

BUT IS IT?

Kissless goodnights!
And dream-dispelling morns!
And love's red roses drooped and dead
And whose unsheathed thorns
Do tear the bosom's core,
And the heart, tempest-tossed!
'Tis better to have never loved
Than to have loved and lost!

CHOOSIN' WEATHER.

If the weather man 'ud ast me what I wanted, rain or shine,
I 'ud say: "Oh, mostly sunny; let me have my weather fine;
But," I'd add, "don't cut the rain out, mix a little rain in mine,
And jist splash the world with dew drops in the mornin'."

I 'ud say: "Let's have some cloudlets trailin' shadders 'crost the green,
Let me hear the thunder grumble an' the raindrops in between,
Then a rosy-posy rainbow over-archin' all the scene!
And jist splash the world with dew drops in the mornin'."

"Let me hear the children laughin', see 'em weavin' daisy chains;
Let me hear 'em squeal an' huddle gittin' in before it rains,

Let me see their funny noses flattened out agin the panes!
And jist splash the world with dew drops in the mornin'."

"Let us have the yellow sunshine in big patches 'crost our ways,
Let us have the splashin' rain drops, let us have our rainbow days;
Make of life a splash of sunshine where a little tow-head plays!
And jist splash the world with dew drops in the mornin'."

DOWN HERE.

Down here jasmine buds are bustin',
Oh, beloveds! don't ye know,
While the perfumes sweep around ye
An' the boughs are droopin' low,
An' the prairies roll off yonder
Meltin' into heaven's blue,
Don't ye know there's peace in Texas,
Where a feller's dreams come true?

JUST EYES.

I think I do—Nay; know I do—
  Like blue eyes passing well;
Not simply just because they're blue,
  But—well, 'tis hard to tell!
And then, again, it isn't hard—
  I think I like their hue
Because—because of my regard
  For you; your eyes are blue.

But were your eyes of brown or gray
  I'd tune my heart as true;
But to brown eyes or gray eyes sway
  Instead of eyes of blue;
And I could sing with all my heart
  To eyes of slaty hue;
Or black, black eyes, whence lightnings dart,
  If they belonged to you.

WERE YOUR EYES BROWN.

I think my first sweetheart had eyes
  Of iridescent brown,
As sweet as vestal litanies;
  Her tresses, tumbled down,
Half hid two pink, delightful ears,
  And sometimes—when she'd frown—
Heigh-oh! where was I? How the years
  Hark back to eyes of brown!

But eyes of gray, or brown, or black,
  Or iridescent hue,
While they are sweet yet, seem to lack
  A something—is it you?
It must be you; were your eyes gray,
  Or brown, beneath their glame
I'd bow me in the same old way,
  And love you just the same.

RESIGNATION.

In the rainbow hues of the someday, dear,
The dark of the present shall disappear,
And we shall know
As soft winds blow
The mists that hide much from our vision here;
When the race is run
And the heights are won,
We shall see it all as the light gets clear.

In the someday land we shall see and know,
And the hope whose fruition seems far and slow,
The why and how,
That puzzles now,
When we've climbed far up and the mists are low;
And the fruitage rare,
In the upper air,
Shall be sweeter the steeper the heights we go.

And He—He has trod in the selfsame mist,
With the tired feet that the spikes had kissed,
And shall we then,
Of the sons of men,
Show a faltering front or at all desist,
Until we win through,
Through the mists He knew,
And we stand on the heights that are heaven-kissed?

A BOY'S WHISTLE.

If I could whistle like I used when I was just a boy,
And fill the echoes just plum full of that old-fashioned joy,
I guess 'at I'd be willin' then to turn my back on things
An' say farewell to scenes down here an' try my angel wings;
Oh, just once more to pucker up an' ripple soft, an' trill
Until the music seemed ter fall agin the far-off hill
Like dew falls on a half blown rose, till it gits full an' slips
Like jewels tricklin', tinklin' down from pink, bewitchin' lips.

Oh, yes, if I could whistle now like I could whistle then!
Jest pucker up these grim old lips an' turn things loose again!

I'd like ter set up on the knoll where trees was all around,
Jest set there punchin' my bare toes into the smelly ground,
An' trillin' jest the same old tune I used to trill o' yore,
With all the verve an' ecstasy that won't come back no more,
Until I seen old brown throat thrush come stealin' from his bush,
An' lookin' round like he would say, say to the hull world, "Hush!"

If I could whistle now I'd like to go along the road,
Awakin' with my whistle shrill the scenes that once I knowed;
Jest send the ripplin' music through the tamaracs an' pines,
An' stirrin' all the blossoms on the mornin'-glory vines;
Jest go sendin' all about me, all behind me an' before,
First loud and shrill as anything, an' then a-gittin' lower,

The same old whistle that was mine, the same old carol shrill
'At used to bid the day good-night an' mock the whippoorwill.

I seen a boy go past just now—his cheeks was like balloons—
But, oh, the air was rendered sweet by old, remembered tunes!
An', oh, the world sat lightly on that childish, happy imp!
His trousers was all patched behind, his hat was torn an' limp,
While one big toe that had been stubbed was twisted in a rag,
But, oh, that imp stepped high and proud with shoulders full o' brag;
An' whistled in the same old way as I was wont to do,
Till my old heart was in the tunes the little rascal blew.

If I could whistle like he did—but now there's somethin' gone!
The trill is gone, the skill is gone! Sometimes when I'm alone

I pucker an' purse up my lips an' try an' try an' try,
  An' then the noise my old lips makes ain't nothin'
    but a sigh.
It ain't no thing of learnin'; it can't be contrived by
    art;
  A boy must be behind it an' a great big boyish
    heart;
A boy just out of heaven must go whistlin' of the
    song;
  No use o' tryin' when we're old, we've been away
    too long.

NET.

She's got her waist of openwork,
  She's got her clock-ed hose,
And hubby takes the bill, he does,
  And softly strokes his nose,
And muses: "Waist of openwork
  And clock-ed hose—my pet,
Is there no discount on these goods?"
  "No," she replies, "they're net."

BROTHERS.

Who'd yearn for the touch of Midas? Who'd bow
'neath a golden cross?
I yearn for the country highways, for a wood
where the branches toss!
For the goldenrod's yellow luster, for the silvery
woodland note
Of the mockbird's carol of gladness that trills
from his swelling throat;
For the gems of the early morning, the dew on each
bud and bloom,
And the sigh of the wind-tossed pinetops and the
prairie's far-blown perfume!

Who'd sigh for the touch of Midas? To him be the
marts of trade!
To me be the bouldered torrents, and pools where
the trout have played!
To him be his strong-box massive, his steel-lined walls
and floors;

To me just a care-free cottage and the freedom of all outdoors!
To him be the gold in ingots, torn from the gloomy mine;
To me but the autumn's glory, and paths where the moonbeams shine!

To him—ah, yes! I wish him a heart that is leal and true!
And a look like a look I know of from eyes of a turquoise blue!
For he—is he not my brother? I wish him the things I know;
The joy of a dew-gemmed meadow, caresses the winds bestow
On the brow of a lover of nature; the upland meads and burns,
Where the shrill "tee-wheet" of the plover brings joy to the heart that yearns.

For who am I? Should I scorn him? If the gods have been good to me,
Shall I take to myself the credit that mine eyes are given to see
The glory of glen and highway, the beauty of tree and bush,

That mine ears are awake to the voices that speak
in the evening's hush?
Oh, no! he is still my brother in spite of his golden
dross;
Him, bound to the car of Mammon; me, out
where the branches toss!

'NEATH JESSAMINE.

The jessamine's faint, sweet perfume
Comes stealing through the evening's gloom,
And thrills the blood like rich red wine—
Ah, Jessie, mine! my jessamine.
The rose may scatter petals fair;
But other blooms are much more rare;
We'll walk where glory vines entwine,
And jessamine! my Jessie, mine!
I'll weave a chaplet for your brow—
I'll try to weave one anyhow—
And 'neath the blooms your eyes shall shine
Of jessamine, my Jessie, mine!
And as the wind-blown blossom dips
I'll stoop to cull from your sweet lips
Love's nectar red, Love's ruby wine,
'Neath jessamine; my Jessie, mine!

SKEERED.

Stayin' home o' Liza nights,
  Gee! but I do squall
When the shadders f'm the lights
  Dances on the wall;
An' when I git skeered she says,
  Liza does: "Say! You!
Big black dog's a-comin' now
  T'eat you up! Boo-woo!"

Never when we ain't alone
  She don't skeer me so,
When my pa an' ma's at home,
  So that they don't know;
But when pa an' ma go 'way,
  Like they sometimes do,
She yells out: "Yere comes that dog!
  Boo-woo-woo-woo-woo!"

'N'en I yell! 'N'en she says:
  "Best hush up that yap!
Never seen in all my days
  Sech a little brat!
Now shet up! That big black dog's
  Lookin' round fer you!
Guess I'll go an' let 'im in,
  A-boo-woo-woo-woo-woo!"

Bet sometime, when I'm a man,
  I'll fix her all right!
Git the biggest dog I can,
  Ketch her 'lone some night,
An' I'll bring that big dog in!
  'N I know what he'll do!
'N I'll jest dance around an' yell:
  "Boo-woo-woo-woo-woo!"

If this world, as poets tell us,
  Ain't the thing that she does seem,
An' we're only just a-dreamin',
  Ain't she just a dandy dream!

THE EARTH.

Give me the hills, the pine-clad hills, the steep ones;
  The jagged cliffs and slopes of living green;
The valleys, vernal valleys, cool and deep ones,
  That round the hills, and rambling down between,
Hold out a brawling course for some swift torrent,
  All boulder-tortured—bridged by fallen tree—
Some men there be who find the hills abhorrent;
  But, oh, the hills—the hills seem good to me!

Or give to me the plains that roll and tumble
  In earthen billows to the sky's far line,
All decked in blooms, a color scheme to crumble
  Into a thousand shades! No words of mine
Could ever paint in way that you might see them—
  You'll have to find and know them as I know,
You'll have to wade among their blooms and knee them—
  Fair are the plains where wild flow'rs bud and blow!

Or give to me the sea! I love its hollows,
  Where fishers' shallops skim the tossing brine,
Light on the wing and daintily as swallows!
  The hills, the plains, the sea, all, all are mine!
Oh, if the jasper gates ope on no garden
  Like these I know I'll weep celestial birth!
And I shall grieve and heaven be a burden,
  And all my plaint shall be: "I want the earth!"

BOULDER-TORTURED TORRENT.

GLAD FOR THE YEARS.

Dear, I am glad that I am grown so old,
My locks of gray—my years—no longer fret,
Nor that life's tide flows slowly now and cold,
Since our ways cross at last and we are met.
And we are met; you young, with locks of gold,
Eyes azure blue and cheeks wherein the rose
Shows through the pearl-tint skin, and manifold,
Sweet charms your soul's white purity enclose.

Life was not much to me until you came;
The mornings dawned in roseate tints and dew;
But, if they held but half the wondrous glame,
I knew it not; my soul so longed for you!
So Adam, in the race's primal time,
I have no doubt, gazed on the earth's expanse;
Saw earth's first roses blow, first blossoms climb,
With naught of soul, of pleasure, in his glance.

And I am old and you are young—and sweet,
Sweet? All the world is sweet since you are come!
Rare blossoms spring where you do set your feet,
And birds sing sweet whose voices erst were dumb;
Or if they sang before—but they did not!
They made a noise—myself I heard them grieve!
Why, I grieved with them—liking not my lot—
But that they sang—nay, I cannot believe!

But now they sing! such exultation thrills
Through all their world as they had never known,
Such exultation as my own soul fills,
As never came to me when all alone;
You wait for me glad-eyed beside the gate;
That we must part so soon does not affright,
For we have met, and, heart of mine, I'll wait
For you as glad when I have said good-night.

When I have said good-night! The parting ways
That I can see before fret not my soul;
For you, long years; for me, the short'ning days;
And then to meet again by life's last goal!
And that is all—life's tide flows slow and cold,
But graying years and locks no longer fret;
For I am glad, dear heart, that I am old
Since age meant you, and we at last are met!

'LONE WITH GOD.

When Mamma tucks the covers in an' leaves me comfy there,
An' I lissen to her footsteps softly goin' down th' stair,
Then th' chair I put my clothes on looks so blurry in th' night
'At I crawl beneath th' cover, an' I almos' die of fright;
An' I shiver 'neath th' cover an' I all squinch up an' hark!
I gits lonesome when I'm all alone with God an' in th' dark.

She leans down an' she kisses me, an' then she says: "Good night."
She says brave tads like I am doesn't need to have no light,
An' then th' house gits silent an' still 'ist like a grave,
An' when th' darkness guthers 'round I wish I wan't so brave,
Fer th' wind outside th' winder groans an' whimpers like a snark;
You 'ist know 'at I git lonesome 'lone with God an' in th' dark!

Seems like Mamma oughter sense it, 'at I git most skeered to death,
  Fer I squinch up an' I huddle down an' try ter hol' my breath;
When I hear th' wind go: "Whoo-ee!" an' th' stairs begin ter squeak,
  Then th' goose-flesh sticks out on me an' th' tears are on my cheek!
An' I know th' ghosts air hantin' fer I hear th' watchdog bark;
  Gee! but I gits mighty crawly 'lone with God an' in th' dark!

Bet ye need God, too, at night time; you don't need Him in th' day,
  When th' sun's a-shinin' gorgeous, then's th' time ye wanter play;
But ye need Him right close to ye when you're almos' dead o' fright
  An' th' goggle-eyes are grinnin' an' a-blinkin' in th' night;
When th' watchdog is a-whinin', an' ye 'ist lay still an' hark—
  My! I sure am skeered an' lonesome 'lone with God an' in th' dark!

Funny how things look so diffrunt! playin' hookey seems a sin,
An' ye swear 'f ye live till mornin' 'at ye'll never go agin
When th' other fellers coax ye; 'at ye won't sneak off ter swim;
An' ye whisper: "Now I lay me"—an' ye promise things ter Him—
An' ye say ye'll keep yer soul white, an' with nary smudge ner mark,
Fer a feller feels plum lonesome 'lone with God an' in th' dark.

APPRECIATION.

While the blue sky bends above me
There are those I know who love me,
And I know that when I lay me down and die, and die, and die,
They'll select my greatest jokes
Every quip that fairly smokes,
And will read my laugh-producers and will cry, and cry, and cry.

LITTLE ORPHANT FELLER.

Ast yer mamma won't she let ye
  Come out here 'ith me an' play;
I kin show ye things, I bet ye,
  'At ye never didn't see.
Ast yer mamma won't she only,
  I won't tangle up yer curls;
An'—an'—I'm so dadburned lonesome!—
  An' I likes ter play with girls!

I'm an orphant little feller,
  Comed away down yere ter play,
An', 'f ye wanter, ye can tell 'er
  'At I've up an' runned away;
An' ye tell 'er I won't never,
  Never scare ye 'f she will,
An' I've runned away ferever
  From th' porehouse on th' hill.

Run an' tell 'er, won't ye tell 'er
  That I'd like ter play 'ith you?
'Ist a little orphant feller,
  An' I'll wait yere till ye do.
Tell 'er, please, ter not be angry,
  Fer my eyes are full o' cry,
An', oh, I'm so dadburned hungry
  I could most lay down an' die!

Tell 'er they've done took my mother
  Ter some placed called "Over There,"
An' th' porehouse give my brother
  Way f'm me—an' I don't care
'F I don't go back there never,
  An' I'm glad I runned away!
An' I'm gone f'm there ferever!
  Tell 'er, can't ye come an' play?

Ast her don't she want a feller—
  Don't she want a little boy?
I kin work like fury, tell 'er;
  Tell 'er that my name it's Roy.
At th' porehouse say they whipped me,
  An' I'm lone an full o' cry!
Tell 'er 'f she don't wanter dopt me
  Let me play 'ith you an' die!

OVER THE HILLS AWAY.

Over the hills and away, away,
Over the hills away,
Where ox-eyed daisies dip and sway,
Where morn's caressing sunbeams play,
And curt'sying buds to the coming day
Pour out a libation of dewy spray,
Over the hills away.

Out over the hills and far, afar,
Over the hills afar,
Where toys and joys of childhood are,
The choo-choo engine and railway car,
And soldiers of tin, begirt for war,
The little tin ship and the wee tin tar,
Over the hills afar.

Over the hills and over the vales,
Over the hills and vales,
Where wee boats spread their gossamer sails,
And the wind talks low to the tall cat-tails,
Till the little boy's heart and courage fails,
At the unknown ways and the unknown trails,
Over the hills and vales.

Oh, for the little boy's joys and fears,
The little boy's joys and fears,
For a charm to banish the dull grey years,
For the red cheeks, wet with a little boy's tears,
And the fearsome dark where the gobble-um leers,
And the corners dim whence the grabum peers,
For the little boy's joys and fears.

TO TRADE: A WORLD.

Dear as I love this gay old world,
  Its golden-fruited trees,
The birds that carol loud and free
  Across its perfumed leas,
The frosty air of winter time
  When birds have all gone south,
Dear heart, I'd give it all, and laugh,
  To kiss you on the mouth!

Yea, I would give the whole round world
  Of meadow, wood and swale,
Its boulder-tortured torrents fierce,
  Each trickling stream and vale;
And laugh with very joy to give
  It all, from north to south!
To just lift up your dimpled chin
  And kiss you on the mouth!

To just lift up your dimpled chin
  And look into your eyes—
Look in to where the soul of love,
  And eke of mischief, lies—
I'll have some placards printed big
  And posted north and south:
WANTED: To trade a big round world
  For one kiss on the mouth!

And when you read that placard big,
  You'll know that it means you,
And you will laugh the old glad way
  That I have seen you do;
But I won't take back one wee word,
  I'll need no North nor South,
For I will be in heaven when
  I kiss you on the mouth!

PAPER DOLLS.

I think that I cut paper dolls until it was after nine,
And the little girl who sat on my knee and gathered them up was mine,
And then she watched while I penciled ears and nose and mouth and eyes
On each paper doll, and she questioned me and harked to my low replies
While I named them all as she held them up, and sat wide-eyed and still,
As I called off Ellen, and Zulia, too, and Lulu, and little Bill;
And then she made me count them all—one—two, and three, and four;
Ellen and Zulia and Lulu and Bill, the children who live next door.

And Nellie and Fannie and Cleve and Belle and William—"and this is you!"
And then she snuggled and kissed my chin and whispered: "My eyes am brue!"
And said: "Dint papa notice 'at?" and reproach and sad surprise
At my forgetfulness looked out on me from her blue eyes,

And I said: "Why, yes, of course I did; but we're just pretending this."
So she snuggled her arms about my neck and held up her lips to kiss,
And I kissed her neck and her forehead then and her hair and a wee, pink ear,
And she twisted and asked: "Tan papa see? My mouf is 'way over here!"

So I kissed her red, red, smiling lips, and cuddled her down to me;
And smiled to think of her wild surprise and her query: "Tan't papa see?"
Then I undressed her and wrapped her well in her nightie all pink and warm,
And told her the story of Little Boy Blue, and snuggled her sleepy form;
But she awoke when I laid her down and stopped my crooning low,
And said: "I'm ain't dot no dolls at all!" and queried: "Dint papa know?"
And so I tiptoed down the hall and gathered for her once more
The paper dolls that bore the names of the children who live next door.

REGRET.

I felt so bad last night I waked from sleep,
  And went to where the moon was shining through
The latticed window, and I scarce could keep
  From crying, thinking how I'd scolded you;
I saw your wee, sob-shaken form again,
  And saw again your every tousled curl,
And heard you strive to speak again, and then:
  "Don't papa 'member I's a 'itty dirl?"

And then I did remember! Such a wee,
  Sweet baby girl you are, dear heart, and I
A great big, burly man; it seemed to me
  The whole vast night was echoing your cry!
Pop's "'itty dirl" unknowing the world's way,
  Unknowing anything of right and wrong,
Just trying to be happy every day,
  Just full of childish laughter and of song.

If I am ever cross again with you,
  When I cry out to God on my last day
May He close tight the gate I would go through,
  Look coldly at me, dear, and turn away!
I must have seemed a dreadful giant, dear,
  And you all wee and lone in a strange place;
Dear "'itty dirl" my night was sad and drear
  With memory of those teardrops on your face.

THAT SWEETHEART OF MINE.

I stood in a hall 'neath a chandelier's shine
When the glasses brimmed high with a vintage divine,
Where toast followed toast, and where wit sparkled
free;
But whatever the toast, dear, I drank but to thee!
I drank but to thee, dear, saw but thy eyes!
And the hall stretched away till I stood 'neath the
skies,
Where we two often walked, where you're waiting for
me;
And so at the feasting I drink but to thee.

Yes, I lifted the beaker, I quaffed of the wine,
And tho' loud grew the laughter, I saw but the shine
Of the eyes whose farewell shone to me thro' a mist;
And in fancy I stooped to the lips I have kissed;
Then I lifted the goblet, full up to the brim!
And I drank to a memory never grown dim!
And I drank to a path that winds down by the sea;
Aye, I drank as forever I'll drink, dear—to thee!

Tho' I walk all alone and afar from the crowd,
Or where Bacchus holds sway; and where revel rings
loud;
Let the toast be a tribute to far native skies,
As I hold up my glass I'll but think of your eyes!
Let the toast be the soldier, the lover, the sage,
Be it goldenhaired youth or the silver of age,
There is only one love in this wide world for me;
And in wine, dear, or water I'm drinking to thee!

Then here's to her eyes, dear, here's to her hair!
The maids of their loving, the dark maids and fair;
Here's to black, brown or blue eyes, each knight to
his taste!
To the tall, lissome maiden, the lass with a waist!
And fill up to the rim till the goblet runs o'er,
Ye have toasted the many—now, standing once more
Drink, drink to the dregs of the ruby red wine—
Here's to her forever! That sweetheart o' mine!

BY THE STORK SPECIAL.

Mary Ellen had wished fer a boy fer a year,
  And me fer a girl, yep, I prayed fer a girl;
Now that in the face of it sounds ruther queer,
  An' unusooal, too, but my Mary's my pearl
Amongst women, an' I knowed thet she'd be as glad
  With a girl—jist as glad as she ever could be—
So I prayed for a girl, whilst she prayed fer a tad—
  Jist a tad of a boy—that she knowed 'ud please me.

I 'ud yoke up the oxen with "Gee!" an' "Whoa, haw!"
  An' we'd go to the wood-lot, the oxen an' me,
An' we'd see the sun rise, an' we'd hear the crows caw,
  An' always in front of my mind there 'ud be
A wee, little chap with his bare little feet,
  An' eyes peekin' at me right thoo a gold curl—
I would see 'im as plain, jist as plain an' as sweet,
  An'—then I'd think of Mary, an' pray fer a girl.

An' Mary, a-washin' the dishes, 'ud dream
  Of a sweet little girl in a checked gingham gown,
With red blooms in her cheeks, an' a mischievous gleam
  In her eyes, an' her yellow hair tumbled an' down,
Till her heart an' her arms 'ud reach out to the tyke—
  She would dream her that real—then, waked from her joy,
She'd git thinkin' of me an' of what I 'ud like,
  An' 'ud blink back her longin' an' pray fer a boy.

An', so fer as that went, I didn't care much—
  Of course men likes boys, it's their nature I s'pose—
But I think the wee hands, with their delicate touch,
  Of a girl—of a girl—well you know how it goes—
I *did* want a boy! Mary *did* want a girl!
  That's the long an' short of it! 'Twould hev been a great joy
Fer me, a boy would, with his hair all a-curl—
  So I prayed fer a girl an' she—prayed fer a boy.

An' you ask me which was it? Now which 'ud you guess?
  God has His own way of a-settlin' such things;

When He sends souls ter earth by Stork's Special
Express,
An' we mortals hear faint the far-flutterin' wings
An' look ter see what has been given ter us,
We're glad fer whichever; an' Mary an' me
Seen two little tykes! Such a glad little cuss
Of a boy! An' a girl! Twins, by ging! Yes, sir-
ree!

STRAWBERRIES.

Hail! the luscious berry!
Once a poet said
God could make a better fruit
Than strawberries red;
Just suggested that He could,
But somehow He wouldn't;
But, by jingo! 'twixt us two,
I believe He couldn't!

WHEN BABE'S ASLEEP.

Why is that, when babe's asleep,
The wee, sweet laughing dimples creep
Into her cheeks, she seems to keep
A tryst where angel's pinions sweep,
When babe's asleep?

Is it, that far beyond the skies,
Her soul harks back to paradise,
And lying there with close-shut eyes
She hears the angel lullabys?
When babe's asleep?

Why do her rosebud lips beguile
My cares, with such angelic wile
I e'en must smile, to see her smile
That helps to while the weary while,
When babe's asleep?

Is it that she doth flit afar,
To find her own soul's natal star,
And in her dreams, with ne'er a jar,
Glides back where erst companions are,
When babe's asleep?

Doth she regret this being sent
On earthly, carking mission bent,
And seeking goes where erstwhile pent
Her soul with other souls was blent,
When babe's asleep?

I would that I the rune might read;
Why dimples, rosy dimples, lead
A smile—ah, how her smile doth plead—
To my old heart; I'm glad indeed
When babe's asleep.

Ah, not for me to enter in
Her joy, or ever hope to win
The answer; still my hope hath been
That 'tis not colic makes her grin
When babe's asleep.

DAD'S GIRL.

Why, yes, babe, I think it's a wonderful fist,
Each dimple, each knuckle, each crease I have kissed;
And the rose tinted palm is as dainty and sweet
As—as—well as the soles of your wee, little feet.
By the way you admire your hands it is plain
Dad's girl will be vain, most exceedingly vain.

You lie in your cradle, and waving your fist
Aloft you just watch while you give it a twist;
You laugh when it opes, when it closes you're glum,
Then gurgle aloud to discover a thumb;
Then you coo and you talk and give daddy your hands,
It's a heart to heart talk and your dad understands.

It's a funny old world; built for babies, you guess,
Where their dads dance and crow, and the sweet tenderness
Of a mother enfolds them and wraps them about,
And kisses and pats the pink feet that kick out,
And life's such a joke for wee lassies and lads,
With their hands clasped together and both held in dad's.

In dreamy-eyed wonder you sink to repose,
And your eyes are like stars when at last they unclose;
Such a funny, big world, full of people that stare,
Like you were the only wee babe that was there,
And they eye one another, and laugh when you crow,
And only your dad seems to listen and know.

Aye, only your dad! when your feet have grown strong,
And carry you out midst the jostle and throng;
When the world and temptations reach swiftly to grasp,
May your hands find your dad's and be held in his clasp!
When your eyes glint with joy or falter with woe,
Tell it all to your dad; for you're dad's girl, you know.

NO LIGHT.

I sat and dreamed of you last night,
Wide eyed,
Alone,
And, in the hush of fading light,
A form of wondrous mold and slight
Sat in a chair, all gem bedight,
Beside
My own.

A form of regal mold and mien,
Fair haired,
Petite,
Was mirrored on my mem'ry's screen,
And old delights woke fresh and keen,
And you, with chastened, humble mien,
I dared
To greet.

Ah, but the glowing west flashed red,
A blaze
Of gold;
Your soul heard all that my soul said,
Love once again, with hoping wed,
Spread the same joy with which it spread
Our ways
Of old.

The night came down, my dream was spent;
No light
To mark
Whence it all fast and faster fled;
My vibrant heartstrings throbbed with dread;
All hope, all joy, all light lay dead.
The night
Was dark!

THE LESSON.

"Lord," I whispered, "I'm a-weary!" and I gazed upon the potion,
That sweet-bitter draught whose draining could but bring my spirit rest,
That would bring me lasting slumber, as the ebb and flow of ocean
Soothes the scarred forsaken derelict that lies against its breast.

"Lord," I whispered, "I'm a-weary! Other ones have gone before me,
And the bitter tears have fallen, fallen in my life like rain!
And the skies have lost their blueness, and much darkness hovers o'er me,
And sleep brings me little resting, and awaking brings me pain!"

"Lord," I whispered, "why the waiting? Why the waiting and the weeping?
If a task awaits my doing let me do it and be gone!
Let me sleep—oh, I'm a-weary!—where those other ones are sleeping!
Let me rest till my awaking on the other side of dawn!"

"My Gethsemane hath found me and hath left me pining, pining!
And my lips are drooped forever that were erst a-curve with mirth!
And the sun has sunk forever that of erst was brightly shining,
And the shackles gall and hurt me that are holding me to earth!"

And I whispered, "On me be it!" and I lifted up the potion,
And already life that irked me seemed a thing far, far away;
And eternity oped to me like a vista of the ocean
Traversed by a path of glory to the gateway of the day!

But a figure stood before me, grand, majestic in its beauty!
And its pinions stretched above me and I dwindled and was small!
And I heard a voice insistent whisper softly: "Do your duty!"
Then the vision smiled and left me and I let the potion fall!

And I whispered, "Lord, I'm ready!" and my selfishness fell from me,
And I looked and saw my fellows and the burdens they must bear,
And the help 'twas mine to give them, and till sleep doth overcome me
Will be all too short for doing. Duty's accents whispered, "There!"

Then, years after, came the angel, and a voice said: "You have waited,
And full well have earned your resting." Then the lips curved to a smile,
When I whispered, kneeling humbly, "Lord, my task was so belated
There remains much for my doing! Leave me yet a little while!"

LULLABYE.

Softly your mother sings, "Bye-o-bye,
Bye, oh, baby, bye,
Slumber, oh, babe, for the moon is high,
And brightly the stars from the deep, deep sky
Look lovingly down where our babe doth lie;
Lullabye, bye-o-bye."

Softly she sings of the spreading tree;
"Bye, oh, baby bye,
There's a cradle that nature has woven thee;
Thou shalt swing so softly, oh, baby, wee,
That the stars shall smile as they stoop to see;
Lullabye, bye-o-bye."

I list to the croon as I sit out here;
"Bye, oh, baby, bye;
Sleep, oh, sleep; or the sand man, dear,
Will scatter his sand till your eyes so clear,
Like blossoms shall fold, and shall disappear;
Lullabye, bye-o-bye."

As the moon-flowers open to greet the moon,
"Bye, oh, baby, bye"
Softly she hums you an old sweet tune,
Tho' the words are her own that I hear her croon;
Ah, baby, a mother's a wonderful boon!
"Lullabye, bye-o-bye."

LONESOME.

The rubber cat stands over where the cotton rabbit stands,
And, oh, but they look lonesome since the day you went away!
And the mirror shows the imprint of your wee and dimpled hands,
And your blocks are scattered where you used to play;
And there's simply nothing doing, for me evenings any more,
Not an hour of jolly romping with you, dear!
Oh, I'd like to get right down, I would, and sprawl out on the floor,
Like the way we used to do when you were here!

I would love to be your horse, I would—I can't keep back the tears,
I feel so doggoned lonesome when I think—
And I'd love to have you grab me, chubby-fisted, by the ears
And pretend that you were leading me to drink;

And I'd love to hear you laugh again, the way you
used to do
When you went and hid behind the curtained door,
And jumped right out and scared me with your loud,
ferocious "Boo!"
Till I fell right down and wriggled on the floor!

It's bound to be a long, long time before the autumn
breeze
Blows coolly from the prairie and the stream,
And my heart just aches to grab you and to jump
you on my knees,
Instead of just to simply sit and dream
Of the rousing times we used to have, the things
we used to do,
And of how I toted you a-pick-a-pack—
Oh, I'm lonesome, lonesome, lonesome for your kisses,
Eyes-o'-blue,
And I'm counting up the days till you come back!

WHEN MARY WAS SIXTEEN.

When Mary was sixteen, I ween,
  When Mary was sixteen,
Oh, then the world was fresh and green
  And each beloved scene,
Recalled today, was fresh and fair,
  And wondrous was the sheen
Of every strand of sunkissed hair
  When Mary was sixteen.

When Mary was sixteen I knew—
  When Mary was sixteen—
Far brighter skies and deeper blue
  Than those I erst had seen;
And, oh, she wore a gingham gown,
  All freshly starched and clean,
And truant curls all tumbled down,
  When Mary was sixteen.

When Mary was sixteen then I—
  When Mary was sixteen—
Oh, then my heart was in each sigh
  And I was passing green;
We two walked out, but far apart
  With lots of space between,
But joy was in each throbbing heart
  When Mary was sixteen.

When Mary was sixteen I culled—
  When Mary was sixteen—
The brighest blossoms ever pulled,
  And she was glad, I ween;
I loved her then; but, oh, today
  She is my wife, my queen!
And dearer than on that far day
  When Mary was sixteen.

SANTA CLAUS.

I have stood fer almost ev'ry thing iconoclasts have done;
I have seen life's idols fallin' inter fragments one by one,
An' I haven't made no murmur, jist perhaps have heaved a sigh,
An' have watched them do their smashin' an' have put the fragments by;
But there's a length they daren't go, a length 'at isn't right,
An' when they tackle Santa Claus, by ging, they've got ter fight!

The dear ol' chap was good enough fer me when jist a boy,
An' brung me jist 'bout all I knowed o' good ol'-fashioned joy,
An' the pleasure that was good enough in them ol' days fer me

Shant be crucified, I promise! Lord, preserve the Christmas tree!
An' preserve the old illusions, fill all childhood's brimmin' cup
With the pleasure 'at attended when I hanged my stockin up!

I believe in him, fer mother said they was a Santa Claus!
An' my dear ol' daddy said so, an' I b'lieve in him because,
'Cause I was a little feller, an' 'cause he was good ter me,
An' because o' all the glory o' the old-time Christmas tree!
An' because o' my own babies, an' the pleasure 'at's their due!
Shall I shut in their sweet faces pleasant doors 'at I've been through?

No sir! Roll yer eyes an' mutter in yer hypocritic strain!
Hope 'at you aint got no children—mebbe I'm a-talkin' plain,
But I'm feelin' on this subjec' deeper p'raps than I kin tell,

SUNSET.

The weeds take on a hue like goldenrod,
And clouds erst gray, the setting sun hath kissed,
Blush rosy red, and dusty jimsons nod,
And, tremulous with light, the evening mist
Doth waver like a scarf by zephyrs swept,
Held in some fairy's hands, some fairy queen,
Who through the long, hot day hath dreamless slept,
And now, awaking, trips across the green.

And o'er her shoulders multi-colored fleece
Doth wrap to guard her from the dews of night;
Her coming bringeth rest, her smile is peace,
Contentment lags behind her perfumed flight,
Bright grows the world when day with night hath met,
And life grows brighter as life's sun doth set.

THE ORPHANT 'SYLUM BOY.

They'll be plantin' of potatoes in a day or two, I s'pose,
An' the niggers'll be workin' in the corn an' cotton rows,
An' the katydids be cheepin' jist outside the cottage door
Where it used to be my home was, but it ain't my home no more!

An' sometimes I see the place
In my dreamin', an' my face
Is all splattered up with teardrops when I wake up in the morn',
Though I know I shouldn't cry;
But I 'most wish I could die,
An' I git so choked an' lonesome that I'm sorry I was born.

Fer I'm jist a little feller an' it don't seem God kin know
How I'm lonesome for my mother when the sun's a-gittin' low,
An' how paths I useter run in coax an' coax my longin' feet,
An' how bad I want my daddy what I useter go an' meet.

But I s'pose that God He knows—
Yit the corn an' cotton rows
'Ud suit me a hull lot better, an' I cry an' cry an' cry,
An' I'd like a chanst ter drap
'Ist my head in mother's lap,
Like I useter when dad whupped me, an' ter hear her "bye-o-bye."

I kin see the moss a-hangin' where they laid 'em side an' side,
An' they orter took me with 'em or stayed with me; bet that I'd
Be a hull lot better feller 'f I could have 'em, an' God knows
That my th'oat jist aches f'm longin' fer the corn an' cotton rows!

They don't seem to be no joy
Fer no orphant 'sylum boy,
An' I ain't no dad ter sing me: "Little feller, bye-o-bye."
Don't ye s'pose that God He knows
'Bout the corn an' cotton rows,
An'—oh, gee! now don't ye foller me, I'm chokin' up ter cry!

MIGHTY HARD.

Fall time down in Texas,
  Weeds are dried and dead;
But, oh, the winter roses
  Are pink and white and red!
And, oh, the morns are misty,
  And girls and noons are sweet,
And any time in Texas
  Is mighty hard to beat!

DUMPUNUMS.

My mamma's makin' dumpunums an' makin chicken gravy,
An' I'm dressed up an' swingin' on the gate to watch for dad,
My mamma's makin' dumpunums an' makin' chicken gravy,
She makes the bestest dumpunums you almos' never had;
An' I dot ribbons in my hair, an' I'm out here a-swingin',
I'm on the gate an' swingin' an' a-watchin' for my dad;
Des a-watchin' for my papa here a-swingin' an' a-singin'
An' I'll tell him 'bout the dumpunums an' my! but he'll be glad.

My mamma's makin' dumpunums—I'm des come from the kitchen,
And me dropped the flour sifter and me spilled some water, too,
And my mamma said: "Miss Twoshoes, some one's goin' to get a switchin'

If they don't go watch for daddy, and I'm 'fraid it
might be you!"
So I'm watchin' for my daddy, now, up on the gate a-
swingin',
An' me'll see him way off yonder when him comes
into the street,
An' me'll dance away to meet him, des a-laughin' an'
a-singin'
An' me'll tell him 'bout the dumpunums an' dad'll
call me sweet.

Dad'll stoop right down to gwab me when he sees me
come a-runnin',
An' he'll kiss me an' he'll ask me: "Who is daddy's
little dirl?"
An' he'll pick me up an toss me an' he'll say: "Now
tell me, Cunnin',
Who tied that baby ribbon on that little yellow curl?"
'N'en he'll put me on him's shoulder an' we'll go back
home a-talkin',
An' he'll love me an' he'll hug me an he'll tell me me
am sweet,
An' the mockin'-birds up yonder will be singin' an'
a-mockin',
An' me'll tell him 'bout the dumpunums that we will
have to eat.

My mamma's makin' dumpunums, me went out in
the kitchen,
An' she was makin' gravy and me spilled some water,
too,
An' my mamma said: "Miss Twoshoes, some one's
goin' to get a switchin',
If they don't go watch for daddy, an' I'm 'fraid it
might be you."
So me's waitin' here for daddy on the gate, a-singin,'
swingin',
A'waitin' till me sees him an' me runs for him's
caress,
Then me'll go out in the kitchen, me a-dancin' an' a-
singin',
An' Miss Twoshoes won't get switchin's while her
daddy's here, me guess.

WHERE HE'S WAITING.

"Is he waiting?
Is he waiting?"
Pipes the field-lark to the thrush.
"Yes, he's waiting,
Still he's waiting,"
Comes the answer from the brush;
Then the voices of the woodland,
Then the perfumed spring-time breeze,
Hushes in rapt expectation
For the step of Mercedes.

"Is she coming?
Is she coming?"
To the field-lark calls the thrush.
"Yes, she's coming!
Now she's coming!"
Comes the answer: "Can't you hush?
Don't you hear the meadows whisper
As the grasses clasp her knees?
Don't you hear the breeze intoning:
'Coming, coming! Mercedes'?"

"Don't you hear it?
Hear her footstep?"
Calls the perky-headed bird.
"No, it wasn't!"
Calls the field-lark,
"Not her footstep that you heard;
That was just the far-blown whisper
Of the far-off, spring-clad trees;
It was never half so dainty
As the step of Mercedes.

"No, but—no, but—
Now she's coming!"
Comes the field-lark's whistle shrill.
"Coming! Coming!
Coming! Coming!"
Comes the chorus from the hill;
And the field and woodland chorus
Stirs the feather-foliaged trees,
And all Nature bids her welcome
Where Love waits for Mercedes.

HAO SHEN.

When life's outlines grow sharp and hard,
And Fancy's flights seem crushed and barred
Beneath the upper and nether stones
Of proper things which the world condones,
And when I long till my heartstrings shriek,
For an hour's reprieve, it is then I seek
The strange, grotesque and smelly den
Of the sire of little Hao Shen,
Who softly plays on a sam-i-sen.

She sits enshrined amidst fins of sharks
And dried birdnests. And pirate barks
On the Yellow Sea have fought and sunk
Full many a treasure-laden junk,
That the spoil may wend through ways of trade—
The costly mats and the gems of jade—
To the strange, grotesque and smelly den
Where smoketh the sire of Hao Shen,
Who picks the strings of a sam-i-sen.

The city's rush seems strangely stilled
By distance vast—the smell distilled
By ginseng root and musty bales,
Woos me afar to where the sails

Of pirate junks in swift pursuit
O'ertake their prey, for the precious loot
That stocks the strange and smelly den
Where sleepeth the sire of Hao Shen,
Who plays to me on a sam-i-sen.

Aye, sleep! at last he sleeps, and well!
And softly the notes of the music swell
With a cadence new, till I seem to stand
A painted picture, and hold the hand
Of a painted maiden with cheeks snow white
And red, red lips; and whose eyes of night
Are much like those in the smelly den—
The den of the sire of Hao Shen,
Who softly strums on a sam-i-sen.

Now loud the notes, now sobbing low,
With all that the maiden would have me know—
That the bird of the East would love to nest
Close, close to the heart in a Western breast.
Ah, would I were but a picture man!
Forever to kneel on a lacquered fan
To the little maid in the smelly den!
Where dreams the sire of Hao Shen,
Who plays with love on a sam-i-sen.

INEVITABLE.

The air is a-weight with a faint perfume,
  Just the last sweet sigh of a dead red rose
That she wore in her hair when we met in the gloom,
  And never a promise the future throws
On the unmarked canvas of the years to be,
  Is worth to me half that the past hath been;
For never a future can bring to me
  One touch of the lips I had hoped to win.

One touch of the lips, or the low, sweet tone—
  Ah, I hold it a lie that the poet sings
That "He travels far swifter who travels alone,"
  For years are heavy, each dawn that brings
An unlived day to the bedside there,
  Of the man who hath none but himself to keep,
Is greeted, yes, greeted with dark despair—
  For Lethe's stream is but found in sleep.

So I breathe a caress on the dead red rose,
  The scarlet leaves of a beauty flown,
Just the faintest breath of a perfume blows
  From out of the years that we both have known,
But the thorns! the thorns! we little dreamed,
  In the dear, dead days, that a thorn was there;
They were hidden then and the leaves but seemed
  A tinted promise of the years we'd share.

But now how the thorns stand out! and sharp!
  Ah, but you must know how they rankle and sting!
Or I never would travel alone, and harp,
  And hope for a tune from a long dead string!
But we loved! we two; we were mad! love mad!
  Your lips to my lips! ah, we two loved well!
Now I have but the thorns of the love we had—
  Who travels alone goes down to hell!

WAITING.

Dear, we shall miss you, we shall and we do;
The lips we have kissed, and the wee dimples, too;
The patter of feet,
The words lisped so sweet;
The parting was bitter, but, yet, we shall meet,
And we shall be glad in the morning.

Yours is the joy
And the peace over there;
The glee in your eyes
And the sun on your hair.

Long, long are the days since 'twas ours, dear, to plan
For you and your future when you were a man;
And now you are gone
And we wait all alone,
And the paths seem to wait where your wee feet have run;
But our hearts will be glad in the morning.

Yours, dear, to play,
And to wait for us there;
Your blue eyes a-shine
And the sun in your hair.

And you won't grow big, but forever be wee,
With the lisp in your accents, the glint of rare glee
In your eyes, dear, and you,
When death lets us through,
Will meet us and laugh the dear laugh that we knew,
And we shall laugh loud in the morning.

Yes, dear, we shall
Laugh loud with you then;
When the gates open wide
And we meet you again.

We know you were met, dear, on passing the door,
By those who had lived and loved babies of yore;
With arms open wide
They stooped to your side,
And we know you'll come running to us happy-eyed,
And we shall be glad in the morning.

And so, dear, we smile
Through eyes dim with tears;
Because you are waiting
For us down the years.

MARGARET.

Baby, oh, baby,
  Innocency's self,
Do you know dad loves you,
  You bewitching elf?
Do you know at night-time
  Where the shadows creep,
Dad is bending over you
  While you lie asleep?

Is there nothing whispers
  How he strokes your curls,
How he lingers by you,
  Daddy's best of girls?
How he's hoping, planning,
  Oh, you winsome mite,
For your pleasure all your life,
  Planning day and night?

When cold blasts are blowing,
  When life's path is steep,
Does he rue the climbing,
  Rue the wind's wild sweep?
Nay; each rough rebuffing
  Never brings him rue;
It but shows the places
  He must smooth for you.

Father's—mother's baby!
  Winsome three-year-old!
From your dainty slippers
  To the ribboned gold
Of your tousled tresses,
  Dearie! Eyes-o'-blue!
You're a wisp of gladness!
  God be good to you!

SOUL OF A FLAME.

You are the somnolent soul of a flame,
  But your eyes are ash-gray and as cold
As ice, and your lips in a fine disdain
  Are curled as a rose leaf rolled
By the touch of an all too boisterous wind,
  Whenever I meet your gaze;
But my heart leaps up, and my pride is blind
  Whenever you cross my ways.

My heart throbs fast and my pride is blind,
  Oh, sinuous maid, and tall,
And out of the wandering, listless wind
  I list for the ferine call
Of the old wild days that bade men take
  Whatever seemed good; and might
Was the only law, and fen and lake
  Were theirs by their might and right.

I know that your white, white eyelids veil
  The look of a kindred soul,
And they bruise my heart like a swinging flail,
  And they urge me to make the goal;
And my arms half reach when you pass me by
  To take you and crush you, too,
In a wild embrace, and I try and try
  What I haven't the nerve to do.

I would clasp you, and crush you, and hold you tight;
  And your red, red lips to my kiss
Would palpitate, and your gray eyes light
  With a startled but welcome bliss ;
Till your struggles ceased and your cry of fright
  Had merged in a languorous sigh;
Till my arms might open to give you flight,
  But yet you would choose to lie.

For you are the somnolent soul of a flame;
  Aye, you sleep, but your eyes ash-gray
Show a flash sometimes, and its wondrous gleam
  Doth lift me, and hold, and sway
My soul, till my arms would clasp you tight
  And never unclasp again!
Oh, for you and the days when might made right!
  For the days when men were men!

BENEATH THE LILACS.

When memories of youth my path besetting,
  Lead me aback along the paths of rue,
Then life is just a grumbling and forgetting,
  And the thing that I am regretting most is you.
You are only just a memory, but hang you!
  Your arms are 'round my neck, your lips to mine,
And I'm humming o'er the songs I erstwhile sang you,
  And your eyes look through the years and shine, and shine.

I see your dimpled shoulders gleaming whitely,
  Your lips are red as on a night we knew;
The night breeze stirs your tresses, lifts them lightly,
  And the maid whom I am kissing, dear, is you.
Ah, I have tried so hard to just forget you!
  Ah, I have burned cigars before your shrine!
But every puff brings back the night I met you,
  And through the puffs of smoke your glances shine.

The lilacs dip with dew, their branches bending,
  Just form a perfumed arch above your head;
Your breath with the sweet lilac's breath is blending,
  And blended were the vows we looked and said.
It's true that I have tried, but I can never
  Forget you, or forget that you were mine;
Howe'er my thoughts may stray they're turning ever
  To look deep in your eyes and see them shine.

I walk again where lilac boughs are drooping,
  And list to other vows from other lips,
But mem'ries of the past forever trooping
  From out the past my present hopes eclipse;
The moonbeams in the dewdrops scintillating,
  Like laughter crystallized in limpid tears,
Drips on my head bowed down where I am waiting,
  Like mem'ries from the chalice of the years.

A WEEPING AND FORGETTING.

Beside your bed I stand while you are sleeping,
  One little roseleaf palm outstretched and pink,
Still on your cheek the tears of recent weeping,
  But on your lips a smile, the while I think
How babyhood is blest by fates caressing,
  That even while their cheeks with tears are wet,
Whate'er the hurt, whate'er the grief distressing,
  'Tis just to weep a little, then forget.

If I should pass tonight, and silent lying,
  With features all austere in solemn gloom,
You'd sob, perchance, unknowing cause for crying,
  Save that you felt a presence in the room,
A presence dread, intangible and fearful,
  Whose stamp of deep repose its seal had set
On my wan face, you'd be a moment tearful,
  You'd cry a little while and then forget.

With your short limbs you haven't far to tumble,
  Nor with your weight do you hit very hard,
But, oh, to hear the wail that marks a stumble
  Would make one think the universe were jarred;
It crieth loud and long, no diminution
  Doth seem to heave in sight, and yet, and yet,
E'en moments find for grief a swift solution,
  You cry a little while and then forget.

If you should pass tonight and, all forgetful,
  In your white shroud should lie midst faint perfumes,
Then I'd recall each grief you'd had; regretful,
  Heart-broken I would kneel amidst the blooms;
Remember your small griefs and shrieks of laughter,
  Your sweet caresses when at night we met,
Then I would bow and leave, but ever after
  I'd weep, and weep, and weep, and ne'er forget!

HALLOWE'EN.

Down from out the mists of mem'ry, like the shadow of a dream,
Comes the vision of an old-time country party Hallowe'en;
And I see the girls peel apples as they did that night of yore,
And toss parings o'er their shoulders to make figures on the floor.

And the letter of their forming was the first one of the name
Of, perchance, a present sweetheart, of some blushing love-lorn swain;
And I sit and smoke and ponder, and I'm living in a dream
Of a pleasure long departed, of an old-time Hallowe'en.

For the children gathered 'round me just last night, and, as of yore,
Came the youths and red-cheeked lassies, helter-skelter, through the door;
And they danced to "Old Dan Tucker," and they bobbed for apples, too,
Till their faces were as drippy as pink roses dipped in dew.

'Twas my daughter Hester's party, she just turning seventeen,
An' 'twas then that I remembered that off-yonder Hallowe'en,
And my heart it grew so mellow that I felt my spirits balk,
So I filled my pipe and softly sneaked outside to take a walk.

Then I seen Jim Jones a-hangin', all forlorn, across the gate,
An' I stepped into the shadow of the apple tree to wait;
An' I seen him rubber-necking at the windows, like he'd try
'F he could see my Hester's shadow in the light, a-flittin' by.

And a-sudden I remembered all about that Hallow-
e'en,
And the how my Hester's mother was just turning
seventeen;
And I snuck around behind Jim Jones an' whispered:
"Howdy do!"
And 'f I hadn't grabbed his coat-tails I've a notion
he'd a flew!

And I put my arm around him—seemed like he was
just a kid—
And I said: "You love her, Jimmie?" and he
gulped and said he did;
And I snuck him through the kitchen, up aloft, and
left him there
In the dark before the mirror, on the landin' of the
stair.

And I went down to the parlor, knocked my pipe out,
and said I:
"There's a charm that I remember Hester's mother
used to try;
If a girl would care to try it—it's a rather eerie lark—
She can see her future husband peering at her
from the dark."

And said, "Hester, take a candle, and go softly up the stairs
Where the looking-glass is standing, an' don't look 'round anywheres,
But just right before you, honey, and just count out, 'One, two, three!'
An' there truly ain't no tellin' half that you are apt to see."

So she took the dip an' started, it a-flarin' low an' dim,
And I knowed her cheeks was flamin' an' her heart was throbbin': "Jim!"
And I snuck outside an' waited, fer I felt I wanted air,
And I sorter felt her mother was some nearer to me there.

And, right then, she came a-flyin', him behind her, down the walk,
An' they had their arms around me, both to plum heart-full to talk!
And all Hester said was, "Daddy!" and Jim said, "It's gittin' cool
Fer this time o' year." Doggone him! I just blubbered like a fool!

SING THE SOUTH.

Sing the South! Oh, the South! Sing the South!
  With her yellow, red roses, and pink!
Where the air is like wine in the mouth,
  And there's glad, surging life in the drink!
Sing the South! Oh, the beautiful South!
  With her sweep of wide star-blossomed plains—
Red-lipped—oh, the kiss of her mouth
  Sends the blood rushing swift in the veins!

Oh, the South! Oh, the South!
Let her glories ring clear,
Like the song in the heart
Of the lover, when, near
Where he leans on the bars,
Trembling beauty appears,
With her eyes like blue stars
Smiling glad through her tears.

Sing the South! Oh, the South! Oh, the South!
  Oh, her bayous that sleep in the shade!
Oh, the pout of her lily-kissed mouth
  Whose kiss maketh man unafraid!
Oh, the lingering clasp of her arms!
  Oh, the witcheries sweet of each wile!
Oh, her broad fertile prairies and farms!
  There's a promise of joy in her smile!

Oh, the South! Oh, the South!
Let her glories ring clear!
And lilt like the kiss
Of her own atmosphere!
Oh, her sweet blossoms lie
Like a kiss on the mouth!
There's no love like the South!
Sing the South! Sing the South!

FULL O' BRAG.

When I've watched you an' your mother scramblin'
'round an' playin' tag,
An' you with curls a-tossin' as ye run,
I swear that, on the quiet, I'm so dad-burned full o'
brag
That I think the world don't hold another one
That kin hold a candle to ye, that kin laugh as loud
as you,
That is half the treasure you are to your dad;
Bet there ain't another baby with such eyes o' bonny
blue,
Or another one whose laugh is half as glad.

Bet they ain't another baby, when the sand man
comes around,
That snuggles down to slumber like you do,
An' they ain't another baby, when it's been undressed
an' gowned,
That looks half so like an angel, dear, as you;

An' they ain't another daddy standin' by a trundle-bed,
An' lookin' on another baby form,
That is buildin' half the castles I'm a-buildin' in my head;
Or another one whose heart feels half so warm.

Bet I like to see ye mornin's, half asleep an' half awake,
Like a dimpled little Cupid, curled an' pink,
An' to see your little paddies both upheld for dad to take,
An' your eyes, now wide in wonder, now a-blink;
Oh, whatever years may fetch me, so they leave me, dear, but you,
Will find me well content to bear the load;
So they leave but you beside me, and your eyes o' twinklin' blue
A-smilin' up to mine along the road.

So I watch you an' your mother playin' tag around the house,
Or tippy-toein' 'round at peek-a-boo,
Now a-yellin' just for gladness, now as still as any mouse;
Never knowin' all the time I'm watchin' you;

Never guessin' half the pleasure you're a-givin' your
old dad,
Who sits an' sizes you up as you run,
Till his heart just beats in jig-time, he's a-feelin' so
derned glad!
An' he waits to grab you to him when you're done.

AWFUL.

"Pick her up tenderly,
Lift her with care;
Fashioned so slenderly
Young and so fair;"
Barefoot for retiring,
Her shriek roused the house;
She's near to expiring—
She stepped on a mouse!

BEREAVED.

Love, I've wandered far today where green forest boughs were bending,
And past wide, wide fields where men are planting corn;
And I found a forest pathway that of old knew oft our wending,
Where, in shady nooks, still hung the dews of morn;
And the mocking-birds were singing, and the skies were deep and blue,
And sweet voices of the springtime seemed to softly ask for you.

Said the mocking-birds, "The maiden? You're not surely here alone!"
And, "Alone!" the echo whispered, and a breeze, tiptoeing by,
Softly searched through all the forest with a low, expectant tone,

And then, stooping to the meadow, where the early blossoms lie,
Gently lifted up each leaflet, then, replacing it with care,
Seemed to pause, then soft departed, whispering: "Not there, not there!"

Still I trod on till I reached it, the old oak tree of our trysting,
Where a mound is, and where wreaths of blossoms lie;
And my face was in the mosses, and the breezes, all unlisting,
Wandered past me, and I heard a quav'ring cry,
Which welled from somewhere within me, a long cry which naught could sate;
'Twas my soul, bereft and longing, calling, calling to its mate.

But the blossoms, nor the oak tree where our names are carven deep,
Seemed to give the mound beside me e'en a thought;
Just the breeze came snuggling to me, and it whispered: "Never weep
For the maiden, for her soul is never caught

In that narrow earthen chamber where the worms
their revels hold;
For the soul seeks warmth and glory, and the grave
is dark and cold!"

Then I wandered far and left it, left the grave, earth-
cold and deep,
For a something whispered to me where to seek,
And I know that I shall find you on the other side of
sleep,
And, although I wake with tear-drops on my cheek,
Still I know you wait to greet me where we never
more shall part;
But the long and weary waiting, just the waiting,
breaks my heart!

A VOW.

That I was cross last night most broke my heart,
  And, when you were asleep, I tiptoed in
To where you lay with rosebud lips apart,
  And tangled curls, and rose-leaf tinted skin,
And stood above you for the longest while,
  Until you sobbed in slumber, and you sighed;
And, dear, that sigh drove back my happy smile,
  And I remembered! And I almost cried.

'Twas such a little thing; you wished to mark
  Across the pages of the book I read,
And I said: "No!" You went off in the dark,
  And mamma rocked you and you went to bed,
And to her crooning went to Slumberland;
  And when night's stillness wrapped its mantle deep
About the world, I crept and held your hand,
  And bent and softly kissed you in your sleep.

And softly kissed the curtains of your eyes,
  And lightly kissed your little finger-tips,
And your half-parted lips, whence troubled sighs
  Still fluttered; and I laid my contrite lips
Against your cheek, and, oh, my babe, my dear!
  I wept that that one word for which I blamed
Myself was ever uttered; and a tear
  Fell on your cheek, and I was not ashamed.

I think I had forgot all you had done
  To make me glad, and make this world seem dear;
The old world never smiled back at the sun,
  And songbirds never caroled half so clear
Before you came! and never drooping bough
  Whispered so sweet and lilting a refrain!
And I was cross! dear baby, hear my vow:
  I'll never, never, never be again!

ONLY YOU.

When the day gives 'way to twilight,
  And the sun's red robes are furled,
I am thinking of just one woman
  In all the wide, wide world;
I am dreaming of just one sweetheart,
  Where the night winds shed their dew,
In all of the perfumed world
  For me there is only you.

The live oaks spread their branches
  Afar in a perfumed shade,
And the lightning bugs go flitting
  And darting across the glade,
And the night bird's song comes ringing
  Through the night and the falling dew,
And all the world seems singing
  Of you, dear heart, of you!

If 'tis love to recall each pressure
  Of the hands when we have met,
If 'tis love to recall each parting
  Till the eyes are dim and wet,
And it is, then know I love you
  Each day and each night-time through!
In all of the world of women
  For me there is only you!

In all of this world of women
  When the sun's red banners furl
I seem to see you only,
  Each wanton and wind blown curl
Comes back and is treasured, treasured
  Where memory's gods are set!
Of all the world of women
  It is you I will ne'er forget.

A GEM.

I know where the opal lies
  Changing and darkling;
I know where, 'neath Eastern skies,
  Rubies are sparkling;
I've ranged the abysses
  Where pearls glimmer dim,
Like tears, or the kisses
  Of sweet seraphim.

But not in Golconda's mines,
  Not in the sea,
Not where the opal shines,
  Shines one for thee;
I'd create thee a gem
  Of the night and the dew
For my love's diadem;
  Oh, my darling, for you.

Just a dash of the blue
  From a summer's blue sky;
Just a wee drop of dew;
  Just a mockingbird's cry
Toned down to a croon;
  Just a touch of the night
When the bright Southern moon
  Sheds its mellowing light.

Just the first faint perfume
  That a jasmine doth shed
When it opes its first bloom,
  Then a dash of the red
That a trumpet vine holds
  'Gainst the tree's shaggy bole,
Like love's flame that enfolds
  And enraptures a soul.

Then a sigh from your lips,
  And a throb from your heart,
When the orb of night dips
  To where lovers must part;
These with strange necromancies,
  'Midst night and 'midst dew,
I would weave with my fancies,
  A jewel for you.

IN SPANISH.

I presume that Chiquita is basking today
On the sunlit plaza in Monterey,
And her eyes flash out 'neath her brow of jet,
While deftly she rolleth a cigarette;
I would give my life—aye, risk my soul,
For the touch of the fingers that deftly roll
The fragrant weed! Ah, Chiquita! yes,
There's a joy untold in their soft caress!

Or there used to be—oh, the Spanish tongue!
Ah, never the anthem of love was sung
In so sweet a tone! I can hear you yet—
There are some things, dear, one can not forget;
It was in my heart to give up and stay
In the sunlit plazas of Monterey:
To let the world and ambition slide,
For my own, my Chiquita! my dusky-eyed!

I could tell of a struggle, you know I could!
It hurts like the dickens, this being good!
'Twould have been no struggle to stay and bask
In the light of your eyes! No, dear! the task
Was to hit the trail! I can see your mouth,
All apout for kisses! it draws me south!
And at night in my dreams there's a dainty hand
Comes to beckon me over the Rio Grande.

Ah, Chiquita, affection can't split in two!
It was a struggle 'twixt eyes o' black and blue,
And I left the black; but I see them yet!
And, deftly rolling a cigarette,
I see you, dear, where we strolled that day,
Through the sunlit plaza in Monterey!
I've no grumble coming; 'twas mine to choose
'Twixt black and blue, and I chose the blues.

So between us two let the river roll;
Black eyes mean passion; blue eyes mean soul!
And I think I have chosen the better way,
Though it leads me from you and from Monterey;
And I am not fickle. Nay, say not so!
I only loved you in Spanish, you know;
And, of course, in love all things are fair,
And I've won me the maiden with golden hair.

SWEET.

Oh, slender, swaying hollyhocks,
  Oh, roses, white and red,
Oh, white moon-flowers blossoming
  When the hot day has sped,
And sweet perfumes of lilac blooms,
  And jasmine odors sweet,
And blossom-bordered highways,
  That coax my prisoned feet;
Sweet—passing sweet—are all of you,
  You hollyhocks that sway;
You roses white and jasmine white,
  You blossom-bordered way,
You white moon-flowers blossoming,
  You roses flaming red,
But my sweet, nightie-robed, wee girl,
  When ready for her bed,
Is sweeter far than all of you,
  God bless her yellow head!

Is sweeter far than you are sweet,
  "Me 'ays me down to s'eep——"
She lisps, with arms about my neck,
  "Me p'ays me soul to teep——"
And breezes lift her locks, and drift
  Them up against my mouth,
And she is sweet, and they are sweet,
  As kisses from the South!
And fainter, fainter grows her voice,
  And soft her eyelids close,
And closer, closer to my heart,
  I clasp my Texas rose;
Oh, sweeter than red roses are
  When the warm day has sped,
Oh, sweeter than the memory
  Of other days, long fled,
Is my wee baby, nightie-robed
  And ready for her bed!

CITY WEARY.

When the old, dog-tired feeling gets to tugging at my feet,
Then my soul goes out a-wand'ring through whole miles of meadowsweet;
When the hotness of the summer gets to surging in my blood,
Then I bathe my soul, in fancy, in the coolness of the wood.

In the wood where mighty boulders, marked by knob and scar and seam,
Lie like the discarded playthings of the giants of a dream;
And the trees are overhanging, showing mottled bits of sky
That reflect amid the shallows where the streamlet trickles by.

There the trees are huge and scraggy as they used to be, I know,
And the teetertail is running in the little streamlet's flow,
And huge ferns their fronds are waving like the wands the fays employ
For some wayward, wandering, timid, mystery-loving little boy.

And the tinting of the forest is all green and gray and gold,
And the glades, where we held picnics in enchanted days of old,
Lie, I know, just as they used to, but they hear no laugh of glee
From the children who once played there, and they're sad as they can be.

Trout are darting through the shallows, or are leaping in the air,
Showing golden sides; as shiny as a little sweetheart's hair
Who went wading, laughing, splashing with me only yesterday;
Oh, old days, and ways, and gladness! How they're drifting far away!

Oh, old days, and ways, and gladness—mother's soft
hand on my hair;
Father's loud hail just to please me, and to fill me
with a scare
As the strange mysterious echoes picked it up and, to
and fro,
Rolled it chuckling through the dimness of the
woods I used to know.

Oh, the city's heat and smother irks me till my heart
is sore!
Oh, the memory haunts me, haunts me, of the
woods I knew of yore!
Oh, the old stream calls me, calls me, singing down
its pebbled way,
To come wading through the shallows like I did
just yesterday!

When the dogwoods are in blossom, every blossom
gemmed with dew,
When the trees have donned new dresses that the
sunlight filters through,
Then my soul goes out in memory to the woods I used
to know,
Down the years there's no retracing to the joys of
long ago.

DRINK.

Let's fill the cup, the loving cup, and of it
Drink to ourselves and to the world and love it;
Drink to ourselves, our two selves, you and me,
And all the world; to blossom nodding lea,
To hill and vale, to desert and to wood;
To me the world and you seem more than good!
That's right—the cup—your gray eyes glint above it!
Quaff deep and long to all the world—I love it!

To all the world quaff deep and long; I love it!
You and the world, while you are in and of it.
I love the world! Or whether near or far
I know I'm in the world—the one you are;
And so I love the world, its every hue;
This world of ours: this world of me and you;
This laughing world, with blue skies bending over,
With you, and me, and bees, and fields of clover.

Drink long and deep to all the world, and, quaffing,
Above the rim show me your gray eyes laughing;
Drink to the day, and quaff a cup to night,
The starlit night, with every bloom alight
With dewy gems left by each passing breeze,
With fragrant, clinging grasses to the knees;
Lift up the cup—lift—you and me together—
To all the world, and every kind of weather!

Lift high life's cup, the sparkling, effervescing!
Give me your eyes, now laughing, now caressing!
Give me your lips, your curving lips and red!
Drink deep of life and love! Fling back your head
Till I shall see your rounded, swelling throat
Throb as the mockbird's throbs with every note!
Throb with a joy too sweet for any voicing,
With a world's love and with a soul's rejoicing!

OH, COME TO ME THEN.

It is mine to be busy and mine to forget,
And yours to be glad as the birds are—and, yet—
Oh, don't be too glad, too forgetful, for I
Shall be lonely sometimes; and the happy gone-by
Will woo me, and coax me, and weave the old thrall
'Round my soul, and my heart, and my senses; and all
That you were you shall be—just as pure, just as fair!
When my soul calls, in memory, come to me there.

It will be only sometimes, just sometimes, and yet,
It will be when I need you! The worry and fret
Of my strife with the world will have worn the veneer
Of my life, dear, so thin that my soul shall appear;
And my heart—the old heart, dear, that beat just for
you—
Shall falter and struggle, and plainly show through
Life's husk of pretense; then, dear, I must go
And hide in the past, or the whole world will know.

When, amid all your pleasures, a voice whispers low,
Of valleys and woodlands and hills, you will know;
And whispers insistent, and will not be still,
Of the song of a stream and a lone whippoorwill,
And a mill, and an inn, and lagoons in a park;
It will be just my soul calling yours from the dark.
Oh, then, to my calling, come back to me, dear,
On memory's wings from the far yesteryear.

THE LIBERTINE.

A banquet's a wonderful thing,
  And the toasts of the folk who respond,
And the glittering lights and the blossoms that swing;
  But out of the hall, and beyond,
Out of the glitter and out of the glare,
  Out of the perfume and out of the glow,
Is a curving seat on an oaken stair,
  And a hall where the lights are low;
        And a brown-eyed girl,
        And a perfumed curl;
  Way back in the long ago.

Way back of the toasts and the talk,
  And the clinking of glass and the lights,
There are low-hung boughs and a moonlit walk,
  And a wonderful night of nights!
Way back of the napery, back of the years;
  Way back of the vases and goblets tall;
Way back of all sorrowing, back of all tears,
  Is a perfumed fountain whose waters fall,
        And a brown-eyed girl,
        And a perfumed curl;
  Back—away back of it all.

Yea, aback, way back of it all,
  Of the glitter, the jest, and the joke,
Are the eyes ashine and the lilting call
  Of a maiden whose heart was broke!
Way back of the wassailry, back of the jeer;
  Way back of the laughter at tales you tell,
Way back of the ages, the eyes shine clear
  On you of a maiden who loved you well;
        Of a brown-eyed girl
        With a perfumed curl;
  They are lighting your road to hell!

IN DAD'S BED.

She said, and she nodded her head each word,
  "I 'ants to dit in dad's bed, me do;"
But her mother—granting her mother heard—
  Had naught to say; but the voice came through,
Through the open door, through the purple gloom,
  To where her daddy had waked and knew
That he wanted her, and he made her room.
  "I 'ants to dit in dad's bed, me do."

And then he waited while moments fleet
  Dropped away from time in a purple deep,
But never a patter of wee bare feet;
  So he snuggled down and was half asleep
When a thin, grieved voice smote on his ear,
  And he caught the sob in the baby tone;
"Ain't papa a-tummin'? I'ms waitin' here.
  Does papa 'ants me to tum alone?"

But later, when she had snuggled down,
  The grief was gone from her voice away,
And the yellow curls from her tousled crown
  Were spread a-wide when the light of day
Came in through the window and touched her head;
  And her dimpled cheek; and its mellow tone
Like gold-dust lay on the curls outspread,
  Dad thought of his girl in the dark alone.

And he kneeled by the bed ere he went to town,
  And his lips lay long on the golden head,
And the dimpled fist that was hanging down
  He kissed; and kissed where upon the spread
A pink palm lay like a crinkled rose;
  And he kissed the lids of the eyes of blue,
And she dreamily said as he kissed her nose:
  "I 'ants to dit in dad's bed, me do."

THE BULLFROG'S TALE.

Oh, a frog once lived in a wide, green pool,
  And he said to himself, said he:
"I'm a big bass hit of the third degree!
  There is nothing that's just like me!
In the muggy depths, or upon the banks,
  I am quite the biggest toad;
No tadpole ever that's yet been hatched
  Has equaled the way I've growed."

Then he struck a note, and he looked about,
  And he saw he was alone;
And he said: "I've a voice like the nightingale,
  Of wonderful depth and tone;
And when, oh, say, has a leg like mine
  Burst on your startled view?
It's the graceful limb of the biggest toad
  That grows in the whole blamed slough."

And he said: "I'm the bulliest bull-toad yet
  That ever has split the scum!
And the cow-toads and the calf-toads, too,
  Have a notion that I am some!
When I trill a note in my swelling throat
  All other toads are still;
While the melody trickles across the slough
  And echoes beyond the hill.

"Oh, I modestly make the claim right here
  That mine is a voice divine!
There ne'er was a bass that the world has known
  That was quite so bass as mine——"
Just then an interruption came,
  And a bull of beef-extract brand
Came prancing down to the old slough's brink
  And stood on the moonlit strand.

There was something wrong with his tremolo stop,
  Or digestion perhaps was bad;
At any rate he just stretched his neck
  And bellowed away like mad!
Then the bull-toad out on the mossgrown log
  Assumed a look quite bored;
And he said: "I wish you'd repeat that note,
  I think I can catch the chord."

So the bull just rumbled away once more,
  Like a thunder storm a-hoof;
And the bullfrog moved his toadstool off
  And sat very much aloof;
And he said with a sneer: "I can beat that note,
  And I'll scare that bull to death!
He has never yet heard a voice like mine;
  Oh-h-h-h, wait till I get my breath!"

So he sat and he sucked the ozone in,
  And he drank up the atmosphere;
And he said: "That bull will die of fright
  When my voice strikes on his ear!"
But an awful finish awaited him—
  When his bellows of air was full
He bu'sted up like a rubber balloon,
  But he never feazed the bull!

There's a moral tied to this bullfrog's tale,
  For this bullfrog had a tale;
'Tis just that ambition uncontrolled
  Is very like to fail.
If you follow the gait of a swifter toad
  You'll find the game's no joke,
It's a pace that will kill all joy you've known,
  And its finish will see you broke.

WOULDN'T YOU?

Wouldn't you like to go today and browse
On a hill-side slope where the winds carouse
In an elfin dance with the daisies tall,
And the larks sing loud, and the thrushes call,
And the peach and apple blossoms float
Like each was an opal-tinted boat
With a fairy helmsman, drove along
On an airy, fairy stream of song?

And you'd almost catch the elfin hail,
And an almost glimpse of the elfin sail,
And, where you dreamed 'neath the apple tree,
The waves would run of an inland sea;
Each wave's crest white with the marguerites;
And, for where the sea and the headland meets,
Just an old gray wall where the shadows flit,
And a maid and a lover might come and sit.

Heigh-o! but I know of a place, I do,
For all of the world like that, don't you?
The wall is of square-hewn stones, and grown
With a century's moss, and I carved my own
And another's name on its face one day,
When she and I, in our childish play,
Had climbed the hill and had wandered there;
My barefoot sweetheart! young and fair!

Heigh-o! I do—I know of the place
Where the grassy sea's green billows race,
And I know the place where, with rock and nail,
I carved our names; and the blossoms sail
In the same old way; but the barefoot maid,
With the sky-blue eyes, who stood half afraid
By my side, is gone; and I'm old and lone;
And as gray and worn as the lichened stone.

SEA-BORN FOLK.

They are born up out of the sea, these folk; they know of the green hills sliding,
Of the rushing valleys in between, of the undertow, low biding
To grasp and to hold their slim, wet limbs, till, struggling, they go under,
Lulled to life's last and dreamless sleep, where, far and faint, the thunder
Of combing breakers irks them not, nor the sun's hot passioned kisses;
Aye, they are born up out of the sea; they know of its green abysses.

From the northmost cape of Shurup far to Kutsin Sima's Isle,
On naked coast, in sheltered port, know they the sea's each wile;

They know each bellying cloud's intent, a-stoop to kiss the brine;
They know the ways of sea-born winds, their every growl and whine;
They meet the wide Pacific swell in league-on-league-long race,
And skim before the simoon's breath down paths no eye may trace.

So they were born out of the sea, all naked, unafraid;
Thrown up on sea-girt isle and shoal, where sea with tempest played,
To battle out their destiny. Aye, brown are they, and squat;
But heavy was their way and long, endurance was their lot;
And rugged, tiring labor's way is never beauty's way;
But, better far, it builds for strength and gives the sinews play.

And they up from the booming sea have climbed, and taken place
In the world's van; have caught the stride, the brine still on their face;

Struck China, whom the world half feared, out from their path and wide;
  Nor seemed to think the deed were much, nor faltered in their stride;
And now the hulking Russ comes down, hot-blooded, filled with ire;
  And Fear hath fled the meeting-place where born are death and fire.

And they fight well, these sea-born ones, Chemulpo's harbor knows;
  It saw them find the lurking foe, heard war's resounding blows,
And saw the Russian cruisers beached and useless in the fray,
  Ere Japan's ships drew off and sped on their triumphant way
To where were other deeds to do and other foes to find;
  Their eyes forever to the front; defeated foes behind.

Aye, they fight well, these sea-born folk, they know of the green hills sliding;
  Of the ravening hollows in between, of the undertow's low biding;

For they have fought it for their lives as, strangling,
they went under;
And they have fought the tempest's wrath and
laughed to scorn the thunder
Of the fierce breakers pounding hard, the tidal wave's
grim combing,
When God's own wrath swept sea and main, and
Neptune's steeds were homing.

THE CITY GIRL.

She said to the man who was driving the team,
"Oh, I'd give almost anything
To hear the sweet whiffletree whiffle," she said,
"And list to the singletree sing."

"They're a-doin' it now," said the sunburned chap,
And truth in his accents rung,
"They're a-doin' it now, but you just can't hear
Because of the waggin' tongue."

A BUG.

A May-bug blundered in last night, and you
Watched everywhere it went around the room;
And, when it came around the light and flew
Near you, your face was full of awful gloom;
And you put down the things with which you played,
And sidled up and stood beside my knee;
And, when it struck my desk, then you essayed
To catch the bug and hand it up to me.

Then, when it clung to your wee finger tips,
You gave a pitiful, long look to me;
And trembling fear distorted your sweet lips,
And when you tried to shake loose and be free,
And it did buzz and cling to your white gown,
I think your squall was heard away down town.

LONGING.

Roses, both white ones and red ones;
  Violets drenched with dew;
And, oh, but the South is bonny!
  And, oh, but its skies are blue!
But I sigh sometimes for the Northland,
  Where lakes and streams congeal;
For the red and white roses your smooth cheeks hold,
  And the swift feet shod with steel!

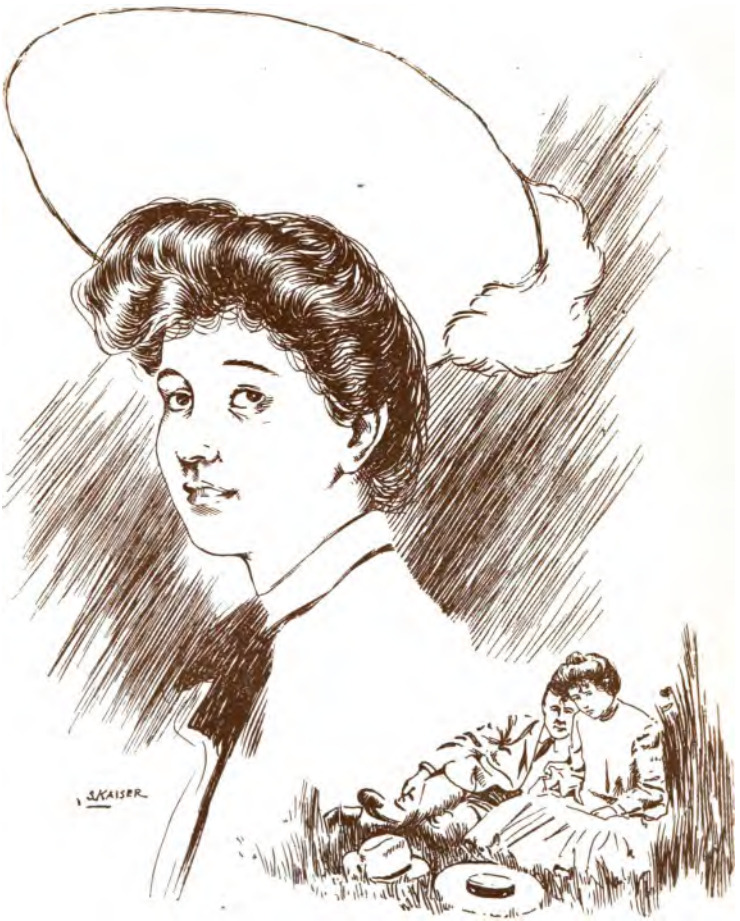
Blue glories and white narcissus,
  And all of the fields abloom!
Sweet, sweet are the wind-flung petals;
  But, oh, for the Northland brume!
For the slopes all white and gleaming,
  For your pouting lips and red;
For the glad, glad lilt of your laughing voice,
  And two on a coasting sled!

The creak of frosty axles,
  Borne through the clear, cold air,
For shrub and tree all frosty-white,
  Like locks of an ancient's hair;
For drifted snow in sheltered spots;
  But more than all for you!
And the steel-shod flight through the halls of night,
  'Neath the star-etched vault and blue!

WOULD WE WERE THERE.

Would we were on that green-clad knoll,
Whence we two saw the landscape roll
In earthen billows far away,
Whence we saw distant forests sway
Beneath a wind's insurgent whirl;
But which scarce stirred the truant curl
On your fair forehead; that sweet tress
The roughest winds dared scarce caress!

Would we were there, whence we could see
The wealth of valley, hill and tree;
The stream, and hear its angry call,
Where, tortured by the waterfall,
It sprang in fury! and then flowed
Complaining down its rocky road;
Would we were sitting where today
The winds and unleashed torrents play!



WOULD WE WERE THERE.

Would that we were! Of late I've dreamed
Of those old days, and it has seemed
That I have sat—you by my side—
Where, at our feet, the valley wide
Rolled down beneath the heaven's blue;
And I have dreamed that every hue
That then did glad our eyes was there,
Each charm of landscape, sky, and air!

Would we again were on that knoll,
In sweet communion, soul to soul;
Where spoken language was as naught;
Where thought swift answered unto thought,
And lips were mute, and for the time
The scene lacked naught of the sublime!
Wood, vale and hill, and cloud-flecked skies
Held some of glory from your eyes!

But wishes wipe no miles away;
Dreams never bring back yesterday;
Or, if they do, in phantom guise
Intangible—I'd see your eyes
Sweet purity look up to mine—
Soul windows!—I would see them shine
As they did then! your truant hair
Wind-blown and free! Would we were there!

A SONG.

There where good fellowship reigns over all;
There where bright lights on loud wassailry fall;
'Midst the rattle of chips and the clinking of glass,
Where repartee quick, and swift badinage pass,
Someone is singing—the words echo through—
"I love nobody in this world but you!
Your heart and my heart together shall twine;
You give me your love and I'll give you mine!"

Hushed is all laughter, hushed are the quips—
What they see I know not, I see red lips!
I feel my heart in your wee hands clasped tight!
I see your eyes with the old look alight!
And my eyes utter softly to your eyes of blue:
"I love nobody in this world but you!
Your heart and my heart together shall twine;
You give me your love and I'll give you mine!"

Yea, we were standing within the cool glen,
Standing together alone once again!
Deep shade about us, blue skies overhead,
As we stood there in days that forever are dead!
My lips said it not, yet I know that you knew:
"I love nobody in this world but you!
Your heart and my heart together shall twine;
You give me your love and I'll give you mine!"

I saw the huge elm and the scar on its side,
And my eyes looked the love that I cared not to hide;
'Neath the old trysting tree we were sitting again,
Gone, gone was our parting, the ache and the pain!
The world seemed created for only us two!
"I love nobody in this world but you!
Your heart and my heart together shall twine;
You give me your love and I'll give you mine!"

LONGING FOR YOU.

The yellow-winged butterfly dips to the rose;
The cannas flare red, and blue glories unclose
On the vine by the porch, all a-sparkle with dew;
But my heart is all sad, for 'tis longing for you.

I know where white marguerites stretch o'er the lea,
And their perfume comes borne on the breezes to me,
And the meadow-lark's wings are a-glint with the dew;
But his song is a torture! I'm longing for you!

Still the warm shadows blend o'er the road that we took,
And the path wends around by the side of the brook,
And the wide water smiles back to heaven its blue;
But my heart knows it not; it is longing for you!

Where the sycamore bends, where the bubbles float
down,
Where the trout seems asleep in the pool's umber
brown,
And the gold of the sunlight is filtering through,
There was joy ere I knew this wild longing for you.

Night falls like a benison on the old vale;
There's a tinkle of cowbells along the old trail;
But far, far wend my ways, and all bordered with rue,
And no promise of peace lights my longing for you.

HIS RESTING.

I've been longing, longing, longing, and awaiting,
dear, your coming;
Since we twain, our fingers interlaced, walked down
the river road;
On the bridge that spans the river I have heard the
drumming, drumming,
Of horses' feet, and heard them as they clattered
down the road.

I have watched the daisies blossom, and have watched
the white leaves falling,
And have seen the red rose petals sifting softly to
the ground,
And have watched the birds fly southward, and my
heart kept calling, calling;
But the wind brought back no answer, and the
world seemed in a swound!

So from springtime, through the summer, till the autumn leaves are sifting
On the breath of coming winter, many winters, shall I go,
Ere the snows above my resting, softly coming down and drifting,
With their whiteness hide the portal to the journey all must go.

Till the spring breeze whispers softly, whispers o'er me in its questing:
"It must be that he is sleeping, whom we knew so long ago;
Still it seems, if he is sleeping, that he takes full long for resting,
And it seems he should be waking when the red wild-roses blow."

And the breeze shall softly ponder: "Tall white marguerites are blowing,
And the field-lark's, and the cat-bird's, and the oriole's loud call
Send their echoes o'er the landscape, and sleek wide-eyed cows are lowing—
Strange he gives so long to resting, he who once so loved it all."

"Strange he gives so much to resting; that his slumber so long presses
Down the lids that used to open with the first light-shafts of day,
When the clouds across the heavens were outspread like burnished tresses—
He who o'er the dew-wet meadows used to take delighted way."

"But it must have been the maiden, she who in his life came floating
Vagrant as the thistledown that wafts so lightly by;
Aye, it must have been—it must have been—the moonlit walks, the boating;
Must have been the kiss at parting, must have been the pensive eye."

"But the maiden was not for him, was not for him, and the knowing
That he never, ne'er could win her, should have irked him not so much
That he should so long for resting when she left him, and, in going,
Left him heavy-hearted, fevered, for her peace-compelling touch."

"But he's resting—while the maiden—aye, what of her? In his sleeping
Does she sometimes walk beside him? If he's sleeping, he must dream;
And she must be with him sometimes. Leave him resting, where the cheeping
Of the katydids shall soothe him, and the singing of the stream."

BYE-O, BABY.

Like a breath upon the pane
Day is sped, 'tis night again,
Darkness covers hill and plain,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

Just a humble trundle-bed
When the hours of day are sped,
For my little tousle-head,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

Just a hiding of the blue
Of the skies and eyes o' you,
Just a lullabye or two,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

Just a roughly home-made spread,
And husk pillow for your head,
Just a little trundle-bed,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

But, oh, tousle-head, my dove,
Years, when mamma's up above,
You'll look back to it with love,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

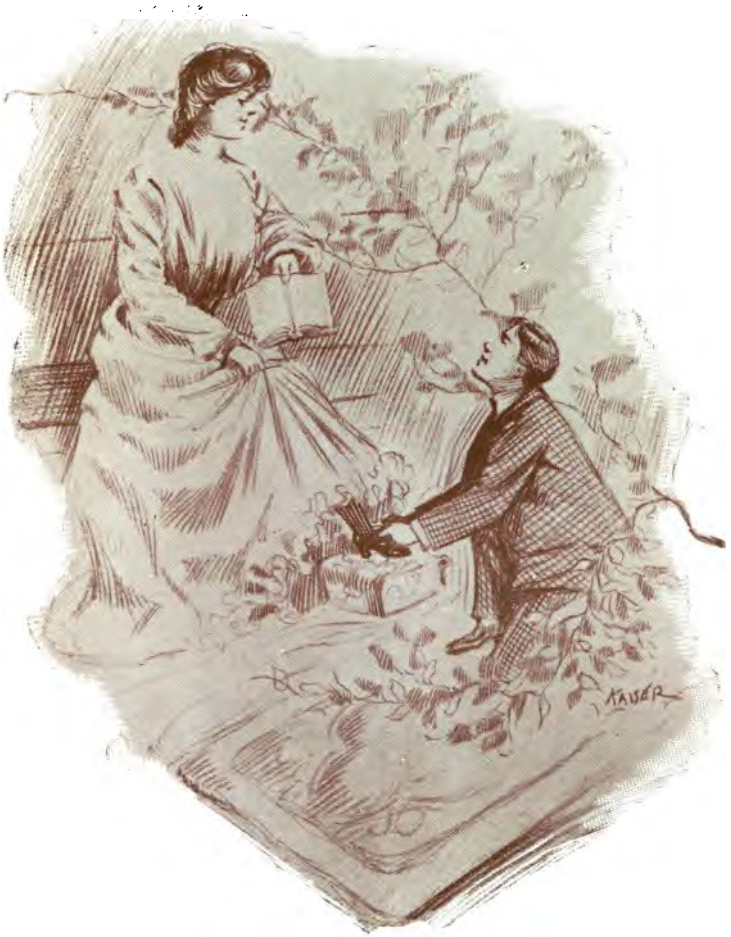
Now the eyelids flutter down,
Now the shadows hide the town,
Shadows blue and umber brown,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

God watch over where you lie,
Smooth the paths your feet must try,
Reunite us by and by,
  Bye-o, bye-o, baby.

A TIE.

I tied her shoes,
  They were tasseled ties;
And I watched her eyes,
  They were gray, gray eyes;
And I fumbled some
  As I tied the knot,
And her gray eyes laughed,
  And my hands grew hot
As I tied her shoes,
  Tied her tassled ties,
And my heart grew hot
  As I watched her eyes.

As I watched her eyes—
  Why, her ankle trim
Was encased in silk,
  And as smooth and slim
As a dream-created



AND HER GRAY EYES LAUGHED.

Thing could be!
And I watched her eyes,
And they laughed at me
As they saw my upraised
Eyes enthuse,
And my clumsy hands
As I tied her shoes.

Ah, maiden fair,
And slim, and tall,
There be many things
Hold a man in thrall;
But for tiny shoes,
And for tasseled ties,
And an ankle trim,
And for gray, gray eyes,
And lace lingerie—
Ah, if you choose
You can tie a heart
To your tasseled shoes.

THE BEST HOUR.

"Get down on the floor here, daddy;
  Get down on the floor and play."
And that is the song my baby
  Sings to me at close of day.
"Get down on the floor and tumble;
  Get down with me, daddy, do.
Get down on the floor now, daddy;
  Me 'ants to sit down on you."

Then overboard goes the paper,
  And down on the floor goes dad,
And onto him clambers baby,
  And baby is more than glad.
And daddy's a horse and wagon,
  Or daddy's a ship at sea
And rolls with a little baby
  As happy as she can be.

Yea, rolls with the babe and tumbles
  And grumbles and haws and gees,
And always a dimpled baby,
  With rounded and dimpled knees,
Sits perched aloft unfearing
  And laughing with childish glee
As the daddy ship goes tossing
  And tumbling across the sea.

And, oh, but that ship is careful!
  The waves may foam and curl,
But never the ship goes plunging
  Too much for the baby girl,
And never the horse gets fractious
  Or plunges or jumps aside
So much as to mar the pleasure
  Of the wee little girl astride.

Oh, good is the hour of gloaming,
  When labor is put aside
And daddy becomes a horsey
  A wee little girl may ride,
Or daddy becomes a plunging
  Big ship on the stormy seas
And is guided and captained onward
  By a baby with dimpled knees.

LONG AGO.

I held her and kissed her—
  Her lips were as red
As the rose in her hair—
  And she kissed me, and said—
Oh, what does it matter
  The thing said, or how?
I know that I kissed her
  On cheek and on brow.

And that was so long,
  Oh, so long, long ago!
Like the lilt of the song
  That I heard, soft and low,
My dear mother sing me,
  The mem'ry comes now
Of the kiss she gave me,
  And my kiss on her brow.

'Tis a dream that will never
  Be true here again;
Ah, mothers and kisses
  Are not made for men!
They are made for wee fellows,
  I've had 'em, I know;
For I was a boy
  In the long, long ago.

Aye, I was a boy,
  Just a tow-headed tad,
All that gives a boy grief,
  All that makes a boy glad,
I knew, and I had
  In the long, long ago,
With the sweet mother kisses
  My lips used to know.

And I'll not forget—
  Ah, her lips were as red
As the rose in her hair—
  How she kissed me and said—
Ah, what does it matter—
  I loved her, I know,
The laughing young mother
  I kissed long ago!

LONGING FOR TEXAS.

No, it isn't hot in Texas; and the cool night dews are falling,
And the katydids are chirping in the grass beside the pool;
And from out the moonlit distances the mocking-birds are calling,
And I know the days are hazy and the nights perfumed and cool!

And I know the jasmine's blooming as it bloomed in all its whiteness,
And my heart is heavy in me for I'm far away today,
And my spirit lags forever, and my tread has lost its lightness,
And I'm humming "Down in Dixie," and my heart throbs "Look away!"

Oh, it isn't hot in Texas, for the cool gulf breeze is blowing,
And the cattle are a-standing underneath the large oak trees,
Or are wending slowly homeward from the pasture, lowing, lowing,
And a drone comes softly to me from the honey-laden bees.

And I'm longing, longing, longing, for the day of my home-coming,
For the lowing of the cattle, and the shadows on the stream;
For the mocking-bird's far calling, and the laden bee's soft humming,
And the night dews falling coolly as the shadows in a dream.

Oh, the rolling, rolling prairie, and the grasses waving, waving,
Like the billows 'neath the gulf breeze in the perfumed purple gloom!
And my heart is heavy, heavy, and my eyes are craving, craving,
For the fertile plains and forests of my far off Texas home.

LIZA.

Liza's comin', comin',
  Hear the streamlet laff;
Liza is a-comin',
  Hear th' mockbird chaff;
See th' birds an' blossoms a-wavin' on th' lea,
That's bekuz my Liza-girl trips along ter me.

Ain't th' air perfumey?
  Ain't th' moments fleet?
Oh, my heart is roomy
  For my Liza sweet;
An' I wait 'er comin', heart a-jump with glee;
Birds are singin': "Liza! Liza comes ter me!"

Shady paths are wendin'
  Where we'll wander through,
Boughs are jest a-bendin'
  'Neath their weight o' dew,
While I wait fer Liza, jest th' buds an' me
Hear her sweet voice carolin', comin' o'er th' lea.

Hear th' echoes ringin',
  Silver tones an' sweet;
Mockbird stops his singin',
  Hers is such a treat;
Buds are ne'er so pretty, ne'er so sweet as she,
Nothin's sweet as Liza when she comes ter me.

What makes Liza hold me
  In such bondage sweet,
Till her charms enfold me
  Kneelin' at her feet?
Till my heart seems burstin' bubblin' songs o' glee?
Jest 'cause I love Liza-girl; she belongs ter me.

WHY?

"Oh, why does he love me?"
  The sweet maiden sighed,
Selecting the garments
  She'd wear as a bride;
"Oh, what's there about me
  To've made such a mash?"
Then the clerk rapped the counter
  And hollered out: "Cash!"

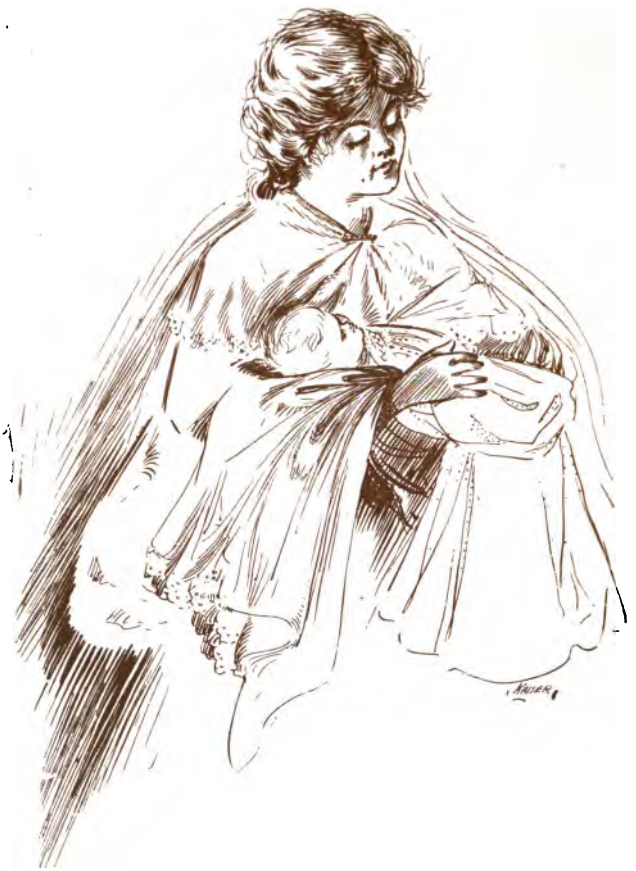
THE JOURNEY.

Oh, loud is the laughter, and gleeful the song,
And dancing and lilting the stepping along,
And the hailing of friends soundeth loud in the throng,
When we are anew to the road.

And sweet are the wee, baby lips to our own,
And rare are the blossoms of life, fully blown,
And love—how it deepens in every loved tone,
When we are midway of the road.

And rest—oh, the peace of the nearness of rest!
When the hurly and burly of life, and its zest
Are over, and when the sun glows in the west,
And we near the end of the road.

Oh, well to have lived in this earthly abode,
To have laughed and have loved and have borne well the load,
To have drifted along with the stream as it flowed,
To the rest at the end of the road.



A WEE, DIMPLED BUNDLE ASLEEP ON YOUR ARM.

MOTHER-SONGS.

Just listen at night when your baby is sleeping,
  A wee, dimpled bundle asleep on your arm,
And the wind of the night is across the sill creeping,
  And touching the lips where the breath flutters warm,

And you'll seem to hear from the night and the distance
  The sweet lullabyes that you heard long ago;
That your dear mother sang with the loving insistence
  That lulled you to sleep as you swung to and fro.

Just clasp your own babe as the white moon is lifting
  Above the dark trees or the roofs of the town,
And from the soft clouds, through the purple night drifting,
  The songs that you knew shall come fluttering down.

The songs that your own mother, lifting and swinging,
Sang to you soothingly, long, long ago,
The songs that yourself to your own babe were singing
The years shall give back in a voice you will know.

At night when the mist in the valley is lying,
Your babe in your arms, is the time for the spell;
When the night-bird calls loud and its mate is replying,
And the night wraps the valleys your heart knows so well,

Oh, listen, then listen, you'll hear a voice calling,
The voice of the mother-love, stronger than death;
And through the blue night like a sweet incense falling,
The old purple lilac shall send you its breath.

Then bend down and kiss the wee sleeping babe's dimples,
And snuggle her to you, and softly intone
The old lullabyes, the old streamlet that wimples
Still sings by the home that your heart calls its own.

Just through your own mother-love shall the replying
  Come down the long years bringing balm to your heart,
And the wee, rosebud lips warmly 'gainst your breast lying
  Shall kiss all the grief from your life, and its smart.

WORRIED.

I did forget the chocolates
  I meant to bring to you;
I did forget the funny page
  From Sunday's paper, too;
I did forget the "so big" doll
  You ordered me to bring—
Did I remember anything?
  I didn't, not a thing.

I just remembered that last night
  You coughed some in your sleep,
I just remembered I awoke
  And worried, just a heap;
I just remembered that your cheek
  Was hot when pressed to mine,
And that I left this morning, dear,
  Before the daylight's shine.

I just remembered, dearie mine,
  The whole day's to and fro,
That you seemed not exactly well,
  And that I loved you so!
I just remembered, little girl,
  When noontime's whistles blew,
That I was foot-loose and might go
  A-hurrying to you.

And then, when I drew near, dear heart,
  Where you were wont to run,
No baby ran to meet her dad,
  No curls danced in the sun,
And no arms went around my neck,
  And no one shrieked in glee,
And no one called, "My papa's tum!"
  No lips were pursed for me.

And I was worried such a lot,
  And the old house did seem
Like some place I had known of yore,
  Or dreamed of in a dream!
My heart was 'way down in my shoes
  Until I heard you call:
"Peek-a-boo, papa!" then it bounced
  Up like a rubber ball.

And didn't I just hunt you out
  From where you hid from me!
And didn't I just tousle you
  Until you shrieked with glee!
The roses red were in your cheeks,
  Again your blue eyes shone,
And you were well as you could be,
  My own, my baby own!

And that's how I came to forget:
  I thought so much of you
I could not think to get the things
  That you had told me to;
But now, when I go back to town,
  I'll get them all, all right;
Be sure to run and meet me, now,
  When I come home tonight.

DAYS O' JUNE.

Noondays o' June days!
Oh, the days o' June!
Oh, the nights and moon's rays!
Oh, the love-bird's croon!
Oh, the woodland choristers! Oh, their lilting tune!
Oh, the flower-bordered ways, bonny ways o' June!

Oh, the welkin clear!
Oh, love's blue, blue eyes!
Oh, the whisper low and near!
Oh, the hand that lies
For a moment in one's own! then, ah, all too soon,
Hand and eyes and days are flown! Ah, the days o'
June!

DISAPPOINTED.

"A Poem to a Daisy,"
  Read the caption, and, heigh-o!
I was full of joy, and crazy!
  Till I got a chance to go
Off to read it; for I knew
There'd be blossoms dipped in dew,
There'd be cloud-ships of rare whiteness
Sailing in the ether blue,
  As they felt the summer's perfumed breezes blow.

"A Poem to a Daisy,"
  So the rhythmic caption read—
Oh, the morning sun was hazy,
  And the whole wide world was spread
With a carpet of the sheen
Of the smoothest softest green
That had ever formed a carpet,
Or my eyes had ever seen!
  And the skies were blue as turquoise overhead.

"A Poem to a Daisy,"
  Oh, I read it, read it through,
And the reading drove me crazy,
  And it filled my heart with rue;
Its imagery was rare,
And its skies were blue and fair;
But it never spoke, not ever,
Of blue eyes and golden hair!
  No, it never, never, never mentioned you!

Just a stocking, wee, and a rubber doll,
An old pipe-case and a darning ball,
A rubber cat, some sleighbells, and
A paper wad in a rubber band;
Some empty boxes, casters, too,
A baby shoe with the toe worn through;
A string of spools and an Irish spud,
And a round-cheeked apple, red as blood—
All these are scattered about my den
Till the house's mistress wakes again.

A DOUBLE PRAYER.

Tonight we've scanned the pictured page,
  And I have given fancy rein
The thirst for knowledge to assuage
  Of my wee bairn; and I have slain
The dragon with St. George's blade,
  And done rare deeds of derring-do
By sunny way and moonlit glade,
  Till sleep has closed her eyes of blue.

Till sleep has closed her eyes of blue,
  And she lies on my arm all still;
The footprints of the night, in dew,
  Are on the lawn, and clear and shrill
The mockbird's song rings through the night
  From the top twig of yonder tree;
And, oh, her form so wee and slight,
  Seems like a fairy tale to me!

And I would slay a dragon, too,
  For her dear sake, and mount and ride
By fell, and brake, and mount, and slough,
  And stem all storm and battling tide,
If so I might insure that she
  Should know no ruth through all her days;
Should walk where birds sing in the trees,
  By pleasant and bloom-bordered ways.

For she's the world, and more, to me;
  My dreams come true, my bunch of bliss;
The light on life's tempestuous sea;
  My morning and my evening kiss;
With her dear arms about my neck,
  And her dear eyes with joy a-glow,
The Universe might go to wreck,
  And I believe I'd hardly know.

She said: "I 'ays me down to s'eep——"
  And heavy drooped the golden head,
"Me p'ays 'e Lord I'ms soul to teep——"
  And now she's ready for her bed,
And daddy adds a word or two:
  "Oh, God, do as You will with me;
But smooth the paths of Eyes-o'-blue,
  Oh, God, be good to Marjorie!"

A GOOD OLD WORLD.

The mocking-bird
  In the ellum-tree,
Oh, he sings, "The world
  Looks good to me!"
And the katydid
  When it comes night
Chirps loud and long:
  "The world's all right!"
And I woke last night
  From my slumber deep,
And I heard my babe
  Laugh in her sleep;
And I stooped above
  Where my babe was curled,
And I told myself:
  "It's a good old world!"

LULLABYE.

Elfland horns are faintly blowing,
Blowing, blowing,
Faintly calling;
Little folks are sleepy growing,
Growing, growing;
Lids are falling;
Wearily each shoe and stocking
Comes away; outside the mocking
Of the mockbird swinging, rocking
On its perch rings clear and high
Mingling with a lullabye.

Little folks asleep are falling,
Falling, falling,
Sleepy growing;
Far away night-birds are calling,
Calling, calling;
Cows are lowing;
Soon will all the world be sleeping,
Babes in mothers' arms are creeping,
And the katydids are cheeping
To the moon up in the sky,
All intoning "Lullabye."

A SMOKE.

Ah, what is so good as a good cigar?
Not the hopes of the future that fly afar;
Nor the joys of the past, for they are gone
With the past to die! How time has flown!
In sorrow I ever have found relief
From the fragrant breath of the burning leaf;
And have quaffed deep, deep of the rare delight
That lurks in a weed that is wrapped just right.

And ever and ever as ashes fall,
And the smoke wreaths curl shall voices call
Thro' the misty years to me, to me,
And my life shall be what I'd have it be—
A spirit of pleasure lies bound within
The dark brown curve of the glossy skin,
And happy Fancy doth preen for flight
While trouble goes out with the match I light.

THE FRAGRANT BREATH OF THE BURNING LEAF.

Such a rare veined leaf and wondrous gloss
Is only grown 'neath the Southern Cross,
In far-off isles of the Southern seas;
Where Night lies hushed by the melodies
That ripples sing in a monotone
As they lave the shores of the broad lagoon;
And a fairy's kiss on each leaf brings forth
The golden spots that shall prove its worth.

And it comes to me in the day's decline,
In the hour when rest and content are mine,
And it is sweeter than maiden's kiss,
Less fraught with grief, more full of bliss;
And 'neath caresses my lips bestow
The smoke-wreaths rise and fancies flow
In a rhythmic sweep, now near, now far—
Ah, there's joy and peace in a good cigar!

THE FLAGS.

Aye, bring the flags, the tattered and shot-torn,
The rent and faded banners that were borne
By hands now dust and cheered by lips now dead,
Flung high o'er ramparts rent with shot and red
With blood of brave, brave men of North and South!
Aye, bring them back! With eyes tear-dimmed, and mouth
Whose lines show grief and back of grief a pride,
The South will take them! For these flags have died
Brave men—no braver! in the rain of death
The flags they yielded only with their breath.

Aye, bring the flags, the flag at Sharpsburg lost!
And bring the flag at Appomattox tossed!
Bring them to Dixie where, for what they mean,
The hearts long dust, the weary years between,
Old Dixie's strains, the far-flung rebel yell,
The sons who died in war's red seething hell,
They will be treasured, kissed with pain-drooped mouth!
There is no North today nor any South;
Abreast they march where unwon heights still gleam;
But save the flags, mementoes of a dream.

RAY.

It does not seem so long ago,
  Not long ago at all,
I heard you trotting to and fro;
  Or, coming down the hall,
I heard you pause outside my door,
  And listened for your call.

A little lass with lint-white locks
  And skin of satin sheen,
And coral lips that barely showed
  The pearly teeth between;
Then you were three—or was it four?
  And now you are sixteen!

And now you are sixteen! Heigh-oh!
  Where have the glad years flown?
Where is the little girl in white
  Who cheered me when alone,
Before I had a little home
  And wee girl of my own?

Do you remember old dog Jim
  Who slept across my door?
Do you remember "Billy horse"
  You used to ride of yore?
And wee Ben chasing candle-bugs?
  Joys you will know no more.

Heigh-oh! I'm getting more than old,
  To muse in such a strain
O'er dogs and boys and little girls
  I shall not know again;
Though they are back there in the past,
  Life's an unturning lane.

But I am glad you are sixteen;
  Brown eyes I used to know
Laugh back at me with the same look
  I knew, and soft and low
A voice says: "She is just as sweet
  As in the long ago."

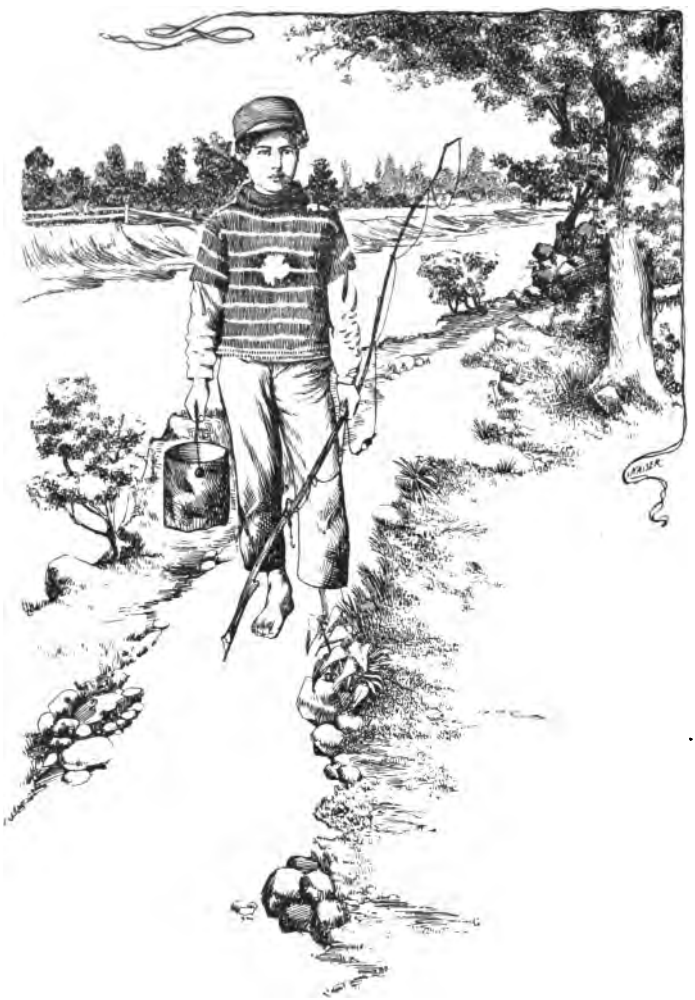
SWEETHEART.

Sweetheart, my sweetheart,
  Now come the days of rue;
The chilling days of weary ways,
  The ways that know not you;
Oh, you are young and I am old,
  Am old and growing gray,
It seems like losing youth again
  To see you go away.

Oh, Sweetheart, my sweetheart,
  It seems like scarce a day
Since you were just a gleeful child,
  Barefooted at your play;
And now you're old and fair and tall—
  What? Fifteen, did you say?
Aye, lithe and lissome and fifteen,
  And I—I'm growing gray.

Sweetheart, my sweetheart,
  When others come to woo,
When other ones of your own age
  Come shyly seeking you,
Remember that old other one,
  Knight-errant now grown gray,
Who knew you when a gleeful child,
  Barefooted at your play.

Sweetheart, my sweetheart,
  Life's shaded ways and cool
Will seem but lone and wearisome
  With you away to school;
Though I shall listen for your voice,
  So lilting yesterday,
'Tis gone—I lose my youth again
  The day you go away.



FOR ONE MORE DAY OF THE ROWDY-DOW.

WANTED.

Wanted—To trade a few gray hairs
For some other days and some other wheres;
A wrinkled and somewhat time-worn brow
For one more day of the rowdy-dow
Of a careless youth; and a bent old form
For the time when my blood flowed quick and warm;
And a crackled old voice for the shriek of glee
That the dear old life once brought to me!

Wanted—To trade life's garnered lore
For the dear old things that I knew of yore;
All, all of the learning derived from books,
For the bubbling glee of the running brooks;
And wanted—To trade each falt'ring limb
For the springy step and the youthful vim
Which carried me up through the morning mist
To the wooded crests that the sun had kissed.

Wanted—To barter the city's street
For the country's ways and the perfumes sweet,
For the rolling fields and new mown hay;
And the cares of life for a chance to play
On the old-time hills where a boy I played,
Where wind-blown blossoms dipped and swayed,
Where autumn's glories flamed and rolled
Down the wooded slopes like a sea of gold.

Wanted—A bargain with you, O Time;
All, all I have for a chance to climb
Up the winding roads to the sun-kissed hills,
Through the ferny brake to the singing rills—
Ah! woe is me! I can offer naught—
Not all of the honors my toil hath bought
Are worth a day of the old-time joy
That I used to have as a barefoot boy.

TO THE NEW-BORN.

Just as you came I looked off to the east,
  And your sister, four years old, her hand in mine,
Stood looking off there with me; and the clouds
  Were heaped and piled, with every fold a-shine
With ruddy gold cast by the rising sun;
  And all the air about us seemed the hue
Of yellow wine; and so we stood and looked,
  Then turned about and looked—and there was you!

And there you were, in warm pink swaddling clothes,
  And thence your voice arose, thin as the note
The winds play on the river reeds, and sweet,
  As sweet to me as from the mockbird's throat;
You cried; and that you cried, oh little girl,
  I wondered not; I saw the gates ajar
That let you out of heaven, and I saw
  The cheapness of the home where now you are.

And that you cried I wondered not at all;
  To be so flung from Paradise were bad,
But to be flung into such arms as mine
  Were more than bad; that you can e'er grow glad
Because of your changed state 'tis hard to think;
  But I will try so hard to do my part
To make you glad; you know, dear, that you fell
  Not in my arms alone, but in my heart.

Not into just my arms, but in my heart
  And in my life, and in your mother's, too;
Say, did you find us unprepared at all?
  Did we not smile as we were waiting you?
Oh, nameless one, oh, helpless one, and wee,
  You don't know half how sweet a world is this;
And I will watch you, guide you, through it all,
  And wake you every morning with a kiss.